

SPIRITUAL



A Catholic
Quarterly

LIFE

Volume 4, No. 4

December, 1958

Christian Humanism

Bishop Wright

Paul B. Steinmetz, S.J.

Dr. Michael F. Maloney

Dr. Henry G. Fairbanks

Fr. Denis, O.C.D.

Fr. Gerald Vann, O.P.

E. J. Keegan

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FOR CHRISTMAS

give

CARMELITE DEVOTIONS

A prayer book which includes
and explains a great variety
of Carmelite devotions as well
as novena prayers for many
feasts of the Church Year.
Illustrated, 246 pages.

Plastic, gold stamping.....\$2.50

Paper 1.50

SPECIAL OFFER: 5 or more copies
of paper edition.....\$1.25 each

DISCALCED CARMELITE NUNS

Carmelite Monastery, Pewaukee, Wis.

(Formerly of Milwaukee)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SPIRITUAL LIFE

A Catholic Quarterly

EDITED BY THE DISCALCED CARMELITE FATHERS

FATHER WILLIAM OF THE INFANT JESUS, O.C.D., Editor

VOLUME 4

DECEMBER, 1958

No. 4

Contents

Christocentric Humanism, by Most Rev. John J. Wright Bishop of Worcester	282
The "Frontier Days" of the Human Spirit, by Paul B. Steinmetz, S.J.	287
Christian Humanism: Past History and Current Relevance, by Dr. Michael F. Maloney	307
Operation Upgrade, by Dr. Henry George Fairbanks	319
The Stranger, by Joseph Joel Keith	326
Principles of Christian Humanism, by Father William, O.C.D.	327
Grace: The Christ-Life in Us, by Father Denis of the Holy Family, O.C.D.	331
Holiness and Humanness, by Father Gerald Vann, O.P.	337
False Humanism, by E. J. Keegan	348
The Pope Is Dead, by Robert Ostermann	353
The Game, by Joseph Joel Keith	355

BOOK REVIEWS

Two Laughters, by Joseph Joel Keith	356
The Pope Speaks, by Michael Chinigo	357
The Temptations of Christ, by Gerald Vann, O.P., and P. K. Meagher, O.P.	360
The Essence of the Bible, by Paul Claudel	361
My Last Book, by James M. Gillis, C.S.P.	362
Our Life of Grace, by F. Cuttaz	363
You, by Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O.	363
The Hermit of Cat Island, by Peter F. Anson	365
The Land of Stones and Saints, by Frances Parkinson Keyes	366
Bernadette, by Marcelle Auclair	368
Archivum Bibliographicum Carmelitanum, published by the Discalced Carmelite Fathers	368
Newman: His Life and Spirituality, by Louis Bouyer	371
Charles de Foucauld, by Lancelot C. Sheppard	373
Writings of Edith Stein, by Hilda Graef	374
A Man of Good Zeal, by John E. Beahn	377
Living the Interior Life, by Wendelin Meyer, O.F.M.	378
Pledge of Glory, by Dom Eugene Vandeur	379
The Risen Christ, by Caryll Houselander	379

SPIRITUAL LIFE is a quarterly published in March, June, September, and December. Copyright, 1958, by the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1233 So. 45th St., Milwaukee 14, Wis. *Subscription Information:* Subscription price in the United States, U. S. possessions, and Canada, one year, \$3.00; two years, \$5.00. In all foreign countries, one year, \$3.50; two years, \$6.00. Single copies, \$1.00. Changes of address should include old as well as new address. Published by The Bruce Publishing Company, 400 N. Broadway, Milwaukee 1, Wisconsin. Second-class mailing privilege authorized at Milwaukee, Wisconsin. *Editorial Contributions:* should be sent to the Editor, 1233 So. 45 St., Milwaukee 14, Wis.

Christocentric Humanism

Most Rev. John J. Wright, Bishop of Worcester

IN THE Christian Dispensation, the new order of things established in the fullness of time by Divine Providence, everything takes on its ultimate and eternal meaning from Jesus Christ. He it is who makes all things new; from Him all things derive their new creation, both things visible and those invisible. Christ became at the moment of the Incarnation and in fact what He had been in Divine intent from all eternity: Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all creation, the One in whom all the uncreated divine ideas and the created divine works are summed up and directed to their proper purpose.

All things take on their ultimate, eternal meaning from Jesus Christ. The fact cannot be too often stressed. It is a corollary of the theology concerning Christ, the Eternal Son of God and the Incarnate Word; it is the premise of the Christian Humanism that sees in Christ, the apex of creation and the link between humanity and divinity, things created and those which are eternal, not only the object of our cult but also the source of the hallowing of all that God has given us to use in accord with Christ's teaching and example and thus to bring us back to God through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ. It was because a divine Person lived and worked in the atoning Christ that all the acts of His humanity had value so infinite; but it was because His humanity was complete and real — Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man! — that things human became intimately blended with things divine and the way was opened for us to become, while remaining entirely human, sharers of the divine nature of Him who had taken on our human lot.

Wherever there is an anti-Humanistic spirit among Christians it

is invariably associated with a heresy. In the early Church *doketism*, *gnosticism*, and other heretical doctrinal denials of the fullness and reality of the humanity of Christ invariably were accompanied, on the ascetical and philosophical side, by moral theories predicating the evil of things created and preaching a false repudiation of created goodness, truth, and beauty. The anti-Humanistic spirit characterized later heresies which either limited the humanity of Christ or the range of His redemptive influence and atoning power; thus the excessive austerities of the late medieval fanatical cults, the bitter contempt of the world in the preaching of the religious revolutionaries of the sixteenth century, and the classic blending of the restriction of the fruits of the redemption with the anti-Humanistic spirit that was the hallmark of Jansenism.

Where, on the other hand, the faith in the fullness and reality of Christ's humanity is unimpaired and truly Catholic, there is a spirit of Christocentric Humanism abroad in a generation and even the "profane" arts take on fresh direction and dynamism from the influence of the sacred truths concerning the place in the created universe of the Incarnate Son of God. Before the polemical necessities imposed on the theologians of the Counter Reformation required unrelenting emphasis of the refutation of the errors concerning nature and grace, the visible Church, the sacraments, and the Incarnation itself, all heresies with inevitable "anti-Humanistic" implications if only because of their radical denial of the goodness of the things that God has made, the perfectibility of the humanity shared with Christ by those for whom He died and the consistency of the visible works of creation with serving as outward signs of inward grace in the accomplishing, through the visible Church, of the invisible coming of the Kingdom of God.

Wherefore, even in the direst moments of the Counter Reformation there was always a strongly Christocentric Humanism alive in the Church and breathed in the writing, preaching, and work of those closest to the authentic mind and heart of the Church of the Incarnate Word. "Devout Humanism" was the concomitant of orthodox, integral Catholicism wherever this remained the spiritual force in the cultural lives of individuals or nations. Wherever Catholicism was driven out by heresy or weakened by the influence of heretical concepts, above all in what pertains to the Incarnation, the true

nature of the Church and the doctrine on the Sacraments, there an anti-Humanistic spirit grew apace; witness the hacking off of the heads of sacred statues and the smashing of the stained glass in English cathedrals, as well as the eschewing of love, laughter, the ordinary delights of the good life, and the supernatural joys of the Eucharist by the Jansenists and the Puritans alike.

But before these bleak days of the Counter and Post Reformation periods, baren in their theology and arid in their spirituality, the theology of Catholicism was at all times and in all places the fruitful mother of those arts and disciplines which are warm with the spirit of Humanism. Not without reason do we remember Thomas More as among the greatest of the Christian Humanists and among the few of the English intellectuals of his time to stand fast by the ancient Catholic Faith. Not without reason were those who were in any sense Humanists in the Christian tradition anxious to remain in some sense Catholics in their theological commitments; one thinks of Erasmus and Colet, as well as those Anglicans who, in the midst of the confusions of Christendom, wanted to think of themselves as still heirs to the ancient beauties of Catholicism even when they had come to uneasy terms with the new errors of Protestantism.

Now that these tensions are beginning to ease and the contribution of polemic to the cause of Christ's true may be less and must be different, one begins to sense anew the humanistic values in the theology of those Christocentric Franciscan humanists who, like Scotus and St. Bonaventure, delighted to speculate on the manner in which the whole cosmos, all things created, are caught up in Christ to be brought back to God, integrated and renewed, in Him. Such an emphasis, Christocentric in its theology and Humanistic in its philosophical overtones, discovered ties with the Incarnate Word, as well as with the creative God, on every level of being; it saw how all that is, from the tiniest seed to most remote depths of space, all in time and all in eternity, takes on its true value from its place in the Kingdom of Christ and its part in His work. *Per Ipsum, et cum Ipso, et in Ipso* — thus does every order of creation give its due glory to God and thus also God reveals Himself, in His power, majesty, and beauty, to us that we may know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world as the condition of our

happiness with Him in the world to come. Here is the heart of Christocentric Humanism.

All things take on their meaning from their relationship to Jesus Christ. Surely this is true in history, whether sacred history, as recalled in Scripture, the Old Testament and the New, or in secular history as this unfolds before the gaze of one who studies the rise and fall of empires in the light of the central place of the Incarnation in human affairs. Hence the inability of the Christian Humanist to draw any sharp distinction between sacred and secular history; hence, too, his lack of concern as to whether there be a true "philosophy of history," so unmistakable are the evidences of the theology of history in the light of which he studies the traces of the will of God and the signs of the fate of men.

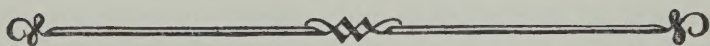
In art, in science, in social doctrine the influence of Christocentric Humanism is not less manifest and unifying. In spirituality it kept the essential difference between the authentic Catholic tradition and all the counterfeit and rival systems, Puritan, secular, or pietistic, which have flourished in and since the Renaissance. This difference reveals itself in spiritual direction and in every form of educational theory; it accounts for the ethical and ascetical views by which Catholicism is distinguished from naturalism and heresy on every front.

The immortal Pope Pius XI highlighted this contention when he pleaded for a sane Humanism in every field of education. Christianity, he lost no opportunity to underscore, concurs perfectly with the ideals and content of such Humanism; indeed, the intrepid Pontiff considered it among his duties, precisely as Vicar of Christ, to cry out constantly "against whatever is not fully and truly human, and *therefore* Christian, against that which is inhuman, and *therefore* anti-Christian." Of such sane Humanism, a Christocentric Humanism which sees in men the image of Christ and in Christ the measure of humanity, Pope Pius XI found St. Albert the Great, among many saints, to be a patron. A like emphasis recurs frequently in the teaching, not to say the personal example, of Pope Pius XII.

Nor can the student of Catholic theology, in any of its branches, find this surprising. The Christian revelation augmented and elevated nature; it in no way annulled any of the goodness, truth, and beauty present in all being. The humanistic spirit of the Christian

attitude toward the goods of nature, even after the coming of the Kingdom of Christ, is summed up in the line which sings *non eripit mortalia qui regna dat coelestia*.

Mere Humanism teaches the person "all things are yours"; Christocentric Humanism teaches this same principle, but adds, as did St. Paul, "and you are Christ, and Christ is God's." In the recognition and ordered love of the hierarchy of being and values implicit in this text of St. Paul lies the genius and the justification of that Christocentric Humanism which, please God, is every day coming more fully into its own.



"The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to co-operate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, that is, to form Christ Himself in those regenerated by baptism.

"For precisely this reason, Christian education takes in the whole aggregate of human life, physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, not with a view of reducing it in any way, but in order to elevate, regulate and perfect it, in accordance with the example and teaching of Christ. . . . The true Christian does not renounce the activities of this life, he does not stunt his natural faculties; but he develops and perfects them, by co-ordinating them with the supernatural. He thus ennobles what is merely natural in life and secures for it new strength in the material and temporal order, no less than in the spiritual and eternal."

Pius XI

The author, a Jesuit of St. Mary's College, Kansas, is engaged in public relations work for Holy Rosary's Mission, Pine Ridge, S. Dak., home of the nation's largest private boarding school for Indian children, located on the largest Sioux Indian Reservation.

The "Frontier Days" of the Human Spirit

Paul B. Steinmetz, S.J.

THE "Frontier Days" with all the glamour of the Wild West exercises a certain fascination over most of us. "Challenge" and "opportunity" are key themes. We may even regret in a half-serious mood that there is no new territory to "homestead." However, what we tend to forget is that there always will be new frontiers for the spirit of man to explore. This bibliographical essay on Christian humanism can be considered as an invitation to live and breathe in the "Frontier Days" of the human spirit.

The writer makes no pretense to have included all possible books. Undoubtedly, the reader will miss a few of his favorite ones. The great books, such as Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Ethics*, Augustine's *Confessions*, and Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* (to mention only a few) have not been included. These original works have been published by the Great Books Foundation of Chicago University. A valuable companion to this publication is *The Great Books: A Christian Appraisal*, 4 vols., ed. by Harold C. Gardner, S.J. (New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1949-1953). An extensive annotated bibliography of original works is contained in *Ideas and Men* by Crane Brinton (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950).

The following essay, then, is meant to be a practical guide to the large number of books of recent years which treat of humanism more or less explicitly. Such an article, it is hoped, will be helpful to anyone interested in present-day thought on the subject, including as it does more than fifty contemporary authors. We shall

explore first, the meaning of Christian humanism; second, the dehumanization that inevitably follows a false humanism; third, the ascetical problem presented by human development; fourth, the diverse means of achieving the ideal of Christian humanism; fifth, its social applications; and, last, an historical confirmation of Christian humanism, showing that all true humanisms, if not Christian, were at least theocentric.

The Meaning of Christian Humanism

The basic idea of humanism is that man must complete his nature by harmoniously developing all his faculties and capabilities and so unifying the complexity which he discovers within himself. The basic idea of Christian humanism is that man can become fully human only by becoming divine through sanctifying grace. For this subordination of human nature to grace does not destroy human values but rather it brings them to perfection. A moral and not a metaphysical impossibility is intended here.

The idea of Christian humanism is completely foreign to any "two-layer" concept of the Christian in which the natural and the supernatural exist side by side, frequently in opposition and never properly related. For the supernatural is not a turning away from the natural, and much less is it a turning against the natural. Rather, from one viewpoint at least, the supernatural is an expansion of the natural, a widening of its horizons. The Christian does not cease to live a natural life, but rather he now lives a natural life that has been "supernaturalized." In brief, Christian humanism is an attempt to get the natural and the supernatural back together in a well-balanced synthesis. However, it must always be remembered that the supernatural is also a going beyond the natural.

Pagan idolatry offers us a remarkable verification of this concept of Christian humanism. Few things seem less compatible with Christianity than pagan idolatry, since in accepting Christianity it must be abandoned. However, the true human value underlying this idolatry (namely, the sense of the sacred in the profane) is not abandoned but expanded. This is the thought of the eminent historian of religions, Mircea Eliade, in his *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958). He has these pertinent observations: "Nowhere in the history of religions do we find an

adoration of any natural object in itself. A sacred thing, whatever its form and substance, is sacred because it reveals or shares in ultimate reality. Every religious object is always an incarnation of something: of the sacred . . ." (p. 158). "In fact this paradoxical coming-together of sacred and profane . . . is what every hierophany, even the most elementary reveals. . . . One might even say that all hierophanies are simply prefigurations of the miracle of the Incarnation, that every hierophany is an abortive attempt to reveal the mystery of the coming together of God and Man . . ." (p. 29). "From one point of view, there has been no break in continuity from the 'primitives' to Christianity. The dialectic of the hierophany remains one, whether in an Australian churinga or in the Incarnation of the Logos. In both cases we are faced with a manifestation, vastly different obviously, of the sacred in a fragment of the universe . . ." (p. 463). It is in the Incarnation, then, that man's natural tendency to recognize the sacred in the profane has been expanded and "supernaturalized."

We find similar thoughts flowing from the pen of a Catholic theologian, that of Jean Danielou, S.J., in his *Advent* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1951). In speaking of pagan rites he says: "Therefore, what we find here is simply that species of universal sacramentalism which is a sort of deep intuition of the divine meaning of things, and which signifies grace, though it does not effect what it signifies. It is a sort of foreshadowing, a sort of call. . . . What is Christianity to do? Should it create new rites, quite different from those in other religions? Not at all. Christianity was to adopt those sacred actions of all religions, now shot through with the grace of Christ. . . . And we delight to recognize in all the great civilizations their particular foreshadowing for each of our sacraments" (pp. 63, 64).

But what is the official attitude of the Church toward this ideal of Christian humanism? A more sweeping approbation can hardly be given than that of Pius XI in his encyclical on *The Christian Education of Youth*: "For precisely this reason [that is to form Christ in those regenerated by baptism] Christian education takes in the whole aggregate of human life, physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, not with a view of reducing it in any way, but in order to elevate, regulate,

and perfect it, in accordance with the example and teaching of Christ. . . . The true Christian does not renounce the activities of this life, he does not stunt his natural faculties; but he develops and perfects them, by co-ordinating them with the supernatural. He thus ennobles what is merely natural in life and secures for it new strength in the material and temporal order, no less than in the spiritual and eternal" (in *Five Great Encyclicals* [New York: Paulist Press, 1939], pp. 65, 66).

However, perhaps, no pope since the Renaissance Pope, Nicholas V, has been as concerned about human values as Pius XII. In *The Mind of Pius XII* (New York: Crown Pub., 1955) Robert C. Pollock has this to say: "In reading through the communications of his Holiness Pope Pius XII, one is struck by a breath of view which catches in its embrace the totality of human life. . . . It would be difficult to find anything to equal the Pope's celebration of human powers and achievements. . . . But the Church is not satisfied merely to acclaim what is good. . . . As Pius XII himself says, the 'Church takes to herself the fullness of all that is genuinely human whenever and however She finds it and transforms it into a source of supernatural energy'" (pp. xi, xiii, xiv). A valuable anthology.

There are a few general presentations of Christian humanism. One of the best is *The Meaning of Man* by Jean Mouroux (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1948). The author presents the Christian humanist's attitude toward temporal progress, the material universe, his own body (its nobility, misery, and redemption) and the spiritual values of personality, liberty, love, and charity. He reconciles the temporal and the eternal, the earthly and the heavenly, the body and the spirit, the human and the divine. The Christian humanist must be one who keeps a delicate balance between two extremes, judging creatures neither too harshly nor too naïvely. Another valuable book is *On Being Human* by Gerald Vann, O.P. (London: Sheed & Ward, 1933). The author's purpose is to show that humanism retains its own inherent value when it becomes Christian. Christian humanism is more appropriate than "the incomplete humanism of the ancients" and "the atrophied humanism of the neo-pagan element of the Renaissance." It is not in conflict with the true Catholic idea of detachment and mortification. Christian humanism is the logical conclusion of Thomistic principles

on the nature of man. Lastly, man can complete himself only in society. A brief but excellent summary of the relation between human values and supernatural ones can be found in an article entitled "Christian Humanism for Today: Fulfillment Not Destruction, Its Goal" by W. Norris Clarke, S.J. (in *Social Order*, issue on Christian humanism, May-June, 1953, St. Louis University Social Institute, pp. 269-288).

Thomistic humanism is treated thoroughly in *A Companion to the Summa*, Vol. 2, *The Pursuit of Happiness* by Walter Farrell, O.P. (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1938). Humanism is considered to be the pursuit of happiness. Happiness is achieved through human activity which demands deliberate control over the passions. Man's activity, if it is human, results in habits of happiness, the intellectual and moral virtues; if it is against his nature, it results in habits of unhappiness, vices, and sin. Man is helped both by law and grace. Another significant contribution is *Mirage and Truth* by M. C. D'Arcy (New York: Macmillan, 1935). The author discusses the competing ideas of contemporary humanisms. He points out that Theism is the only possible answer, outlining its minimum elements. Having laid this foundation, he develops the Christian ideal, showing that it is "true and satisfying and beautiful." But he concludes with a warning that the Christian ideal is attained only in the Cross of Christ.

Joseph Nuttin's *Psychoanalysis and Personality* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1953) is a remarkable psychological contribution to a better understanding of humanism. In the first part of the book, the author presents an excellent evaluation of Freudian psychoanalysis. In the second part he develops a theory of personality based on what is good in Freud and compatible with St. Thomas. He shows the importance of internal tension in the constructive development of personality and proposes a theory of motivation centering around the basic dynamic human needs. There is an excellent annotated bibliography on the psychology of human development. However, an important work not included here is *The Character of Man* by Emmanuel Mounier (New York: Harper & Bros., 1956). This is a uniquely comprehensive description of human nature as discovered in art, literature, theology, philosophy, and politics as well as in all the sciences dealing with man. It is a

work of profound introspection and extensive scientific observation.

A good way to see the concrete effect the ideal of Christian humanism has in the spiritual life is to study the French writers of the seventeenth century connected with the humanistic movement. According to Henri Bremond in his *A Literary History of Religious Thought in France*, Vol. I, *Devout Humanism* (New York: Macmillan, 1928) the principal representatives were Father Rich-eome, S.J.; St. Francis de Sales; Father Etienne Binet, S.J.; Bishop Jean Pierre Camus; and the Capuchin, Yves de Paris. An excellent summary with abundant quotations.

However, it may be more correct to consider Christian humanism as a spirit rather than a doctrine or a school. Rev. Pierre Pourrat in the third volume of his *Christian Spirituality* (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1953) emphasizes that in relation to spirituality humanism is a spirit of optimism. "The humanistic spirit inclined to think favorably of human nature and to avoid humiliating it, and not to condemn its inclinations but to moderate its impulses. . . . Devout humanism grew side by side with the Reformation and by its optimistic estimate of human nature was a permanent protest against Lutheran Manichaeism" (p. 62). The study of Father Pourrat brings out the fact that the proper evaluation of man is a controversy that the Church will always have with her. The conflicts centering around Manichaeism and Pelagianism, Augustinian pessimism and Thomistic optimism, predestination and free will, the spirit of à Kempis and of De Sales are merely a few examples of this.

The Dehumanization of Man

Man without a true ideal of humanism soon degenerates to a subhuman level. Father Gerald Vann, O.P., traces the causes of today's dehumanization in his *The Water and the Fire* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1954). Modern dehumanization has been brought about by the frenzied tempo of living, the disintegration of education, the loss of symbols, the loss of the vocation of women, the loss of organic community life, and the degradation of matter. The author explains these points chapter by chapter.

Neurosis is an advanced stage of this dehumanization, a fact remarkably brought out in *Neurosis and Human Growth: The*

Struggle Towards Self-Realization by Karen Horney (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950). The neurotic process is the search for personal glorification springing from the need to actuate a false idealized self, based on pride but harassed by doubts, self-contempt, and self-hate. This idealized self is the source of many neurotic claims, needs, emotions, and adjustments. Consequently, its pursuit leads to a complete alienation from the real self. Neurotic solutions, such as domination, self-effacement, dependency, and resignation are tried, but they merely further the process toward complete disintegration.

The theme of dehumanization is also reflected in contemporary American literature. This is easily seen in *Fifty Years of the American Novel: A Christian Appraisal*, ed. by Harold C. Gardiner, S.J. (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1951). The evaluation of such novelists as Theodore Dreiser, John P. Marquand, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Dos Passos, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe, John Steinbeck, and James T. Farrell indicates to what extent the tragic frustration of modern man is mirrored in literature. Bishop Sheen gives ample documentation of this same point in his *Philosophy of Religion* in a section entitled "The Frustrated Man" (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948, pp. 346-369). Dr. Thomas P. Neill in his *Makers of the Modern Mind* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Pub. Co., 1949) also outlines the main stages of the dehumanization of man which has been taking place. He shows how the thought of Luther, Calvin, Descartes, Locke, Newton, Rousseau, Kant, Bentham, Marx, and Freud contribute to this dehumanization. A very readable style.

The Ascetical Problem Presented by Human Development

Humanism will always remain a precarious achievement since man by nature is a creature of conflict. This idea is developed unusually well by Gustave Thibon in his *What God Has Joined Together* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1952). Even in a state of pure nature (that is, without sin or miracle) man would be subject to this duality. Explaining human conflict by original sin alone is a "sign of mental laziness" and a "fantastic *Deus ex machina*." The most fundamental reason is, instead, the metaphysical reality that man is a complex being, unaided by an infallible instinct and

burdened with the constant necessity of choice and effort. The author discusses the conflict between the spirit and the vital instincts as well as that between the life of the senses and the spirit. The purpose of true asceticism is not to subdue the rebel flesh but, rather, to sublimate it so that it becomes tractable to the Spirit. The author concludes with a personal opinion "that in most of the saints of past ages there was an exaggerated tension between the vital and the spiritual, a certain incapacity to unify the plenitude of the divine in the normal exercise of biological faculties, especially with the vocation of marriage. There will arise tomorrow, perhaps, a new type of sanctity, in which lovers of God will be completely human" (p. 34).

However, before we can discuss any ascetical problem connected with humanism we must have a correct notion of asceticism. Johann Lindworsky, S.J., has presented a sound analysis in his *Psychology of Asceticism* (London: H. W. Edwards, 1936). He claims there are three major tasks for asceticism: (1) the recognition of the religious vocational ideal, (2) the evaluation of this ideal, (3) the realization of it in its psychological aspects. An asceticism which does not remain a means to the ideal, by becoming an end in itself and usurping the ideal, is a false asceticism. This development depends upon the author's earlier book, *The Training of the Will* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Pub. Co., 1938, a reissue). Here he presents a doctrine of will power which was revolutionary in his day. The will is primarily strengthened by experienced values rather than by repeated exercise of difficult actions. Many false notions about chastity, fasting, discipline, and moderation in the use of the senses are corrected by Joseph Pieper in his *Fortitude and Temperance* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954). These virtues are all a part of temperance which is defined as a "selfless self-preservation of man's inner harmony." This stimulating commentary on St. Thomas should help to clear up a lot of confused thinking.

Another reliable ascetical guide, B. W. Maturin, points out in his *Self-Knowledge and Self-Discipline* (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild, 1939) that the object of self-discipline is not to destroy the evil we imagine within ourselves. Nor is it repression of truly human activity. "Self-discipline must necessarily be in proportion

to the misuse of any sense or power, but it is the true use of it we aim at in every act of self-discipline" (p. 59). A widely read spiritual writer today, Thomas Merton, in his *No Man is an Island* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1955) also treats of asceticism in a more balanced and less austere manner than is sometimes done; he does this, however, without courting indulgence. "Nothing that we consider evil can be offered to God in sacrifice. Therefore, to renounce life in disgust is no sacrifice. . . . One of the chief tasks of Christian asceticism is to make our life and our body valuable enough to be offered to God in sacrifice" (p. 105). This ideal of asceticism demands Christian humanism as a foundation.

In fact, a vigorous life of the senses is still possible within the limits of asceticism. Charles D. Boulogne in *My Friends the Senses* (New York: Kenedy & Sons, 1953) describes the human and spiritual values of man's sense life. He treats the five senses one by one, showing how they can be a valuable asset to the perfect Christian life. However, Yves Montcheuil in his *For Men of Action* (Chicago: Fides, n.d.) warns us that "the attitude of the Christian in regard to the world is not simple. He cannot follow his tendencies without restraint, but neither can he reject and destroy everything. His attachment should be considered and should be accompanied by constant purifications" (p. 116). Yet, how many older ascetical writers would be shocked at such language.

Even a true sense of guilt and suffering can be conducive to human development, as can be seen in *Guilt* by Caryll Houselander (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1951). Leaning heavily upon the thought of Carl Jung, the author distinguishes between a false sense of guilt and the Christian one. The first leads to frustration and the latter to a constructive acceptance of suffering. The author points out that "the saint's willingness to suffer results in an integrated, balanced personality; it is the doorway to a limitless variety and magnitude of experience; it liberates the capacity for love."

We should also note the book entitled *Holiness Is Wholeness* by Josef Goldbrunner (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955). The author claims that "our Christian education, our asceticism and striving for perfection tend all too much to repress and eliminate the

natural soul. There is still no affirmation of our total human nature; the deeper levels of the soul are still excluded from Christian penetration" (p. 30). As a remedy he urges a new, more positive approach to the natural demands of the body and a revision of traditional Christian asceticism according to the discoveries of depth psychology. He also pleads for a method of religious development that parallels the slow process of organic growth and avoids violating and forcing the vital energies of man's unconscious life.

The most difficult synthesis to achieve is certainly that of humanism with the mystical asceticism of St. John of the Cross and the other mystics. However, Joseph Dalby, D.D., in his *Christian Mysticism and the Natural World* (London: James Clarke & Co., n.d.) tackles this precise problem. He concludes in part: first, that the mystics testify to the goodness of the natural in its own order; second, that their apparent condemnation of the natural (which they usually contradict in other places) must be taken in context, that is, natural goodness as compared to the infinite goodness of God. Third, their terrifying denials of sense and even intellectual activity cannot be considered in itself as a substitute for the whole Christian Gospel.

We should be well aware by this time that the relationship between asceticism and humanism is complex, a point emphasized in a symposium of fifteen French experts conducted by *La Vie Spirituelle* and published under the title of *Christian Asceticism and Modern Man* (London: Blackfriars Pub., 1955). L. Cognet tells us that in the past "superficial attempts to bring Christian asceticism into harmony with humanism inevitably led to failure. The real solution would have been to think out the whole ascetic problem afresh in a humanistic spirit. We shall see that the two really new syntheses which saw the light in the sixteenth century — those produced by St. Ignatius and St. Francis de Sales — did work along these lines" (p. 54). This book tries to continue this trend. We are first given the scriptural, historical, philosophical, and theological background of asceticism. Then the modern mentality along with anthropological, psychiatric, and other scientific considerations are developed. Tentative conclusions are then drawn, including a thought-provoking remark: "The purpose of Calvary was not the death of Christ but the resurrection, and the purpose of asceticism

is not to annihilate life but to increase it, to further the life of grace and the life of rational nature as well" (p. 262).

There are those who take alarm at the present trend toward Christian humanism with its "incarnational" view of reality. One of these is Louis Bouyer of the Oratory who makes the following confession in his *The Meaning of the Monastic Life* (New York: Kenedy & Sons, 1955): "Like many of our contemporaries, we were brought up in the illusion that side by side with the negative, crucifying asceticism of past centuries, there was room for a constructive, positive asceticism which would reject nothing in this world but would consecrate all in it to the glory of God." He continues: ". . . let us say that the meaning of this book . . . is to show that there is no integral humanism other than a radically eschatological humanism. True, the Christian must love the world. . . . But that does not mean that the Christian must aim at settling down in the world and using the Gospel to that end" (p. x). Either Father Bouyer grew up amid false prophets of Christian humanism or else he has badly misunderstood and distorted the "incarnational" viewpoint. His condemnation is certainly not applicable to the authors discussed in this essay. Moreover, Father Bouyer himself falls into a number of exaggerations in his attempt to convince others of his thesis, a thesis which he extends beyond the monastery to all Christians. The strange idealistic philosophy contained in the chapter entitled "Angelic Life" makes any position worthy even of the name of humanism impossible. For the material world is merely a reflection of a reflection. "And this is the material world, the common objectivization, so to say, of the multiple angelic thoughts, just as the invisible world is a distinct objectivization of the manifold aspects of the unique thought of the Father" (p. 28). It is small wonder that Father Bouyer has such little respect for the "incarnational" view of such an illusory world. And man is an "angel in substitution" who was "created as a possible saviour of the world." The implication is that man would have been unnecessary if the bad angels had not fallen, that he is a creature due to a misfortune, and that it would be much better to have the angels rather than their substitutes. Perhaps, Father Bouyer is unduly influenced by Origen.

However Christian humanism is compatible with the religious

vows, as Father August Brunner shows in his *A New Creation* (London: Burns & Oates, 1955). He writes in his preface: "The question is, whether religious poverty, chastity, and obedience are really means to perfection, and whether they bring man to fulfillment as man; for they seem more conducive to loss of personality. No answer is possible until we have a clear idea of property, marriage, and freedom, and their function in attaining to true manhood. And this presupposes clarity as to the nature of Christian perfection. That is the theme of the four chapters of this book" (p. 7). Father Brunner shows how deceiving appearances can be.

The Diverse Means of Achieving Christian Humanism

Man's entire environment is making him either more or less human. We must liberate ourselves from any narrow-minded prejudice we may have. Humanism is not to be identified with the selfish pursuit of literature and art by dilettantes who are heedless of the masses of common people. Although literature and art have a place of pre-eminence, they must not be set up as humanistic idols. Consequently, the humanism of liberal education, art, leisure, work, marriage, love, and the liturgy will be indicated.

According to Jaime Castiello in his *Humane Psychology of Education* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1936) liberal education consists in transforming the raw material of human nature by means of contact with the true, the beautiful, and the good. The author presents the psychological function of the principal study courses including language and literature, history, science, philosophy, and religion. These studies should produce the "Ideal of Harmony" which is the fundamental aim of liberal education.

A good general treatment of art and humanism is contained in *The Arts and Man* by Raymond Stites (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1940). Jacques Maritain in his *Art and Scholasticism* (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1943) indicates a few of the main features of a Thomistic theory of art which he says must still be developed. In *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953) the same author discusses various aspects of the creative activity in man as well as makes a remarkable evaluation of modern art.

Man must escape the world of work in order to remain human

according to Josef Pieper in his *Leisure, the Basis of Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1952). Leisure is not idleness nor simply the lack of work, but an active contemplative attitude by which we become receptive to all reality. Leisure takes its origin in religious contemplation.

However, work in itself cannot be condemned as antihumanistic, a fact demonstrated in *The Philosophy of Work* by E. Borne and F. Henry (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1938). The authors present the historical evolution, a metaphysics, and a morality of work. They outline a Soviet philosophy of work and conclude with the religious problem of work.

Marriage is a means to humanism which most Christians must use. Dietrich von Hildebrand in his *In Defense of Purity* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1936) shows that sex has a profound influence in the development of human perfection. He develops the meaning of purity in marriage and shows that virginity is not a denial but rather a higher fulfillment of man. A so-called "Personalist Doctrine" of marriage has been developed in recent years. Rev. Francis W. Carney in his *The Purposes of Christian Marriage* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1950) evaluates the most important writings on this subject and summarizes the movement: "The advocates of this new synthesis of the purposes of marriage, therefore, would have us lessen the emphasis so characteristic of past theology of marriage on the procreative purpose of the institution and direct increasingly more notice to the development of the clearly more personal purposes of marriage; that is, the fostering of conjugal love and perfecting human personality, which would find its practical, ultimate realization in the child" (p. 205). Although some authors in this movement have fallen into exaggerations, valuable contributions to matrimonial humanism have resulted. One of the best of these, written in nontechnical language, is *Marriage, A Great Sacrament* by Jacques Leclercq (Fresno, Calif.: Academy Lib. Guild, 1953). A beautiful example of marriage developing human personality is had in *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers* by Maria A. Trapp (New York: Lippincott, 1949).

However, love is an important factor in human development for everyone. Two profound treatments, both philosophical and psy-

chological in their approach, are contained in *The Mind and Heart of Love* by M. C. D'Arcy, S.J. (London: Faber & Faber, 1945) and in *An Essay on Human Love* by Jean Guitton (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951).

Christian humanism finds its culmination in the divine liturgy. Dietrich von Hildebrand develops the humanistic aspects of the liturgy in his *Liturgy and Personality* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1943). True human development consists in being spiritually awake, that is in responding to everything that has a true value. The basic disposition necessary is a reverence for the inherent worth and sacredness in things. The proud and sensual man is incapable of this response. The liturgy is a powerful means of developing this true consciousness. Similarly, Sister M. Laurentia Digges, C.S.J., in her *Transfigured World: Design, Theme, and Symbol in Worship* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1957), shows how God transforms man and the world of nature through the liturgy. This liturgical transformation increases man's appreciation and enjoyment of nature. The author displays a vivid imagination in treating of the liturgy as God's artistic creation.

Social Applications

Christian humanism aims not merely to transform the individual but also the entire social order. Thus we speak of a Christian civilization and culture. One of the best presentations of this is *True Humanism* by Jacques Maritain (New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1938). The only true humanism is Christian humanism since all anthropocentric humanisms eventually lead to a destructive atheism. Consequently, we must remake a Christian society; we must return to a "Humanism of the Incarnation." The author first determines the precise distinction between the spiritual and the temporal and their mutual relationships. He then discusses the nature of Christian society as it was in the Middle Ages (the consecrational conception) and as it must be developed today (the secular Christian conception). He very correctly observes that a modern Christendom will not be a mere return to the Middle Ages, since today the secular order must enjoy a greater autonomy than it previously did. These same principles are treated in *The Church of the Word Incarnate*, Vol. 1, by Charles Journet (New

York: Sheed & Ward, 1955) on pages 194 to 324. These principles applied to particular areas of living, create a Christian sociology, economics, medical ethics, technology, etc. However, to include all these subjects is simply beyond the scope of the present essay.

The fundamental structure of Christian society is outlined in the now famous pastoral letter, "Growth or Decline?" by Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard (in *The Church Today* [Chicago: Fides, 1953], pp. 93-170). This is certainly one of the most original ecclesiastical documents of the century containing many thought-provoking statements. The relationship between Christian humanism and the apostolate is treated by Yves Montcheuil in his *For Men of Action* (Chicago: Fides, n.d.) and Msgr. Gerald Philips in his extraordinary book, *The Role of the Laity in the Church* (Chicago: Fides, 1956).

The need of a world-wide Christian humanism is proposed by the Chinese convert, John Wu, in his *Beyond East and West* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1951). He warns against the danger of regarding Christianity as Western. He shows that Confucius, Tao, and Buddha have prepared the pagan soul for Christ in the East just as Plato and Aristotle have in the West. He pleads for a fuller assimilation of Eastern culture by the Church.

An Historical Confirmation of Christian Humanism

In order to have a true understanding of Christian humanism, we must discover how this ideal has been expressed in actual historical circumstances. History alone can show us humanism as exemplified in social order, that is, in civilization. From history we can best test the validity of the principle that all true humanisms, if not Christian, were at least theocentric.

Complete historical proof of this is found in the writings of Christopher Dawson. A good synthesis of selections and a commentary on his writings are contained in *The Relation Between Religion and Culture According to Christopher Dawson* by Daniel O'Connor (Montreal: Librairie Saint-Viateur, 1952). The main purpose of Dawson is to demonstrate the need of religion as the vital force of any living culture. This has been the case in prehistoric times (*The Ages of the Gods*, 1928; this and the following books are published by Sheed and Ward in London) in the de-

velopment of world religions and religious philosophies before Christ in both East and West (*Progress and Religion*, 1937), and in the development of Western European culture (*The Making of Europe*, 1939, and *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, 1950). A return from the disintegration of the past four centuries to the Christian religion is our only salvation today (*The Judgment of the Nations*, 1942).

Another Catholic writer who uses history to establish the ideal of Christian humanism is Hilaire Belloc, a fact brought out by Frederick Wilhelmsen in his *Hilaire Belloc: No Alienated Man, A Study in Christian Integration* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1953). Modern man, due to his estrangement both from God and the world of nature, is twice alienated from himself. However, Belloc is no alienated man, for scattered in his writings is his concept of Christian humanism, that of the integrated man. This is an excellent analysis of Belloc's major works.

The thesis of Dawson and Belloc is verified by prominent scholars. Werner Jaeger shows the need the Greeks had for a theocentric humanism in his *Humanism and Theology* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1945). The theocentric humanism of Homer based on myth was destroyed by the rationalism of the Sophists. Their anthropocentric humanism spelled out the decline of Greek civilization. It was the vocation of Plato and Aristotle to salvage the Greek way of life by once again establishing a theocentric humanism, one now based on rational thought instead of myth. They invented the science of theology. This thesis is thoroughly substantiated in the same author's *Paideia, The Ideas of Greek Culture*, 3 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939-1945).

Medieval Christendom is certainly another verification of our historical principle. Gerald Walsh, S.J., in his *Medieval Humanism* (New York: Macmillan, 1942) traces the development of Christian humanism from the early Fathers of the Church through the age of transition when the Church was assimilating the barbaric hordes (including Boethius with the *sophia* of the Greeks, Cassiodorus with the practical education of the Romans, and St. Benedict with the *charis* of Christ) to the reign of Charlemagne who provided the necessary conditions for a revival of learning. Then follows the Christian Renaissance of the twelfth century represented by

John of Salisbury and terminating in St. Thomas and Dante. This book contains an excellent annotated bibliography on every phase of medieval civilization. However, it misses more recent works, such as the brilliant essays of H. Daniel-Rops in his *Cathedral and Crusade: Studies of the Medieval Church, 1050-1350* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1957). Another good work is *Catholic Art and Culture* by Edward I. Watkin (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1944). The author compares the history of Christian art and culture to the seasons of the year: the classical autumn is the Christian spring; summer is medieval Christendom; late summer is the Renaissance; autumn is the age of Baroque; and winter is the modern world. Many very interesting comments.

A very comprehensive bibliographical essay on the period of transition from the Middle Ages to modern times is found in *Present Day Thinkers and the New Scholasticism: An International Symposium*, ed. by John Zyburg (St. Louis: Herder, 1926; Part III, pp. 369-521, written by the editor). The author comes to the following conclusions: first, Thomistic philosophy in no way militates against the rights of man and nature; second, the Renaissance cannot be reduced to one formula, since there were two distinct elements (the Christian and the pagan); third, the failure of scholasticism in directing and assimilating the Renaissance was not owing to a fatal flaw in the system but to factors extrinsic and utterly alien to its true spirit, including the decadent formalism of the Christian philosophers themselves. He finally shows the extensive contributions in all areas of life that the Middle Ages made to modern times. The fact that the pagan Renaissance humanism rejected the Christian solution to its problems along with the decadent scholastic formalism is one of the reasons for the tragic condition of man today.

Fulton Sheen amplifies this point in his *Philosophy of Religion: The Impact of Modern Knowledge on Religion* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1948). This book traces humanity's history from the "dignified man of the Renaissance who still breathed in the atmosphere of Christianity" to the frustrated man today, "isolated from himself and the community and from God." The same author in his *Communism and the Conscience of the West* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1948) gives us another sobering analysis

of the Western world. He points out that "Communism is not the enemy of our Western bourgeois, capitalistic, materialistic civilization. The truth of the matter is: Communism is related to our materialistic Western civilization as putrefaction is to disease" (p. 49).

A very stimulating explanation of the contemporary crisis of humanism is *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* by Henri De Lubac, S.J. (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1950). "The negation which underlies positivist humanism [Auguste Comte, Marx, Ludwig Feuerbach, and Nietzsche] is not so much atheism, in the strict sense of the word, as *antitheism*, or more precisely *antichristianism*" (p. v). The author reconstructs the thought of these men with a truly dramatic sense. He also praises Dostoevski for making "one profoundly important social truth clear: man cannot organize the world for himself without God; without God he can only organize the world against man. Exclusive humanism is inhumanism" (p. vii).

A good introduction to contemporary American humanism is *American Humanism and the New Age* by Louis Mercier (Milwaukee: The Bruce Pub. Co., 1948). The author discusses the thought of Irving Babbitt, Robert Hutchins, Walter Lippmann, Lynn Hough, and Paul Elmer More, coming to the conclusion that a supernaturalized humanism is the real culmination toward which this movement is unconsciously tending.

Conclusion

The urgency of the problem of Christian humanism can be realized by reading *The End of the Modern World* by Romano Guardini (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1956). The author evaluates three major periods (the Middle Ages, the modern world and its dissolution, the world to come) according to the changes which have taken place in man's concept of nature, personality, and culture. He delineates the "mass man," the man of the future who will retain nothing of the past. He discusses the new culture which will be dominated by a precarious control of great destructive power. The only hope is in a new Christian ethic which will be able to face the consequence of man's awesome mastery over nature. He offers us faith, neither in man nor history, but in God alone and in His divine providence.

However, one finds a moderately optimistic outlook in *Scientific Humanism and Christian Thought* by Father D. Dubarle, O.P. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955). Man knows the disastrous effects of having let the industrial revolution run its course undirected. He must make a critical evaluation of the new technological revolution and the radically new world it will create. The author concentrates on two areas: nuclear power and the systematic construction of self-regulating machinery. Certainly the destructive use of these two developments is a very real problem. But their peaceful uses will also demand intelligent cultural and sociological adaptation. For technology may bring about a sufficient supply of energy for the whole world, the automatic regulation of present industrial machinery, the development of cybernetics (that is of the transfer of automatic control from the machine to the nervous systems of animals and men) and the mathematization of the human situation through electric computators. These extensions of the human brain, mastering data which a whole team of research men could not assimilate in a lifetime, may perhaps digest and interpret the behavior patterns and the statistical constants of collective life. What should the Christian attitude toward this technological revolution be? Father Dubarle, O.P., tells us “Science with its great power and urge to conquest is a continuation of man’s vocation as regent over all creation.” But ever since man disobeyed the law of God which forbade him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the root of man’s sin can be considered as a desire for knowledge independent of any relation to God. The Christian will then ask himself if science and technology are not guilty of this sin. Modern science must be redeemed. However, it is by no means certain that modern science, continuing to develop, will be reconciled to Christianity and its power to redeem and to sanctify the human will to knowledge. Perhaps the world of the antichrist will be that of science in willful rebellion against God. The Christian should not resign himself to this despair but rather strive to deliver science from the diabolical powers which threaten it.

As we finish this bibliographical essay, we should realize more than before that there will always be new frontiers for the spirit of man to explore and that we are still living in the “Frontier Days”

of the human spirit. Father Walter J. Ong, S.J., develops for us the ever expanding vision of a modern humanist in his essay entitled "Technology and New Humanist Frontiers" (in *Frontiers in American Catholicism* [New York: Macmillan Co., 1957], pp. 86-103). Technology is a part of a long sequence of cosmic development going back perhaps 5,000,000,000 years. Viewed from this evolutionary background the pattern of increased acceleration and intensity of development should be no surprise to us. For it took perhaps 1,000,000 years for the invention of the alphabet, only 3000 for printing, a few hundred for the telegraph, less than fifty for the wireless, and a few decades for television. "Yet technological progress need not be an ever increasing rush to destruction . . . technology has been necessary in order for us to have learned what little we know about tremendously important details of man's place in the universe. Moreover . . . it has made possible advances in communication which are essential to man's 'occupation' of this planet, to man's taking over the planet from the forces of brute, nonintellectual nature." Father Ong, S.J., calls this process the "hominization" of the universe, an event which has a tremendous significance for the Christian. "For if the technological age is of major importance in the 'hominization' of the universe, this 'hominization' itself reaches its apogee by being at once realized and transcended in the Person of Christ, the God-Man. . . . This 'hominization' of the universe partially accomplished before Christ's coming was a preparation for Him. . . . Following His coming and His work of redemption, the increasingly intensified 'hominization' of the globe is in a very real way His own work, for only as the 'hominization' progresses can the world as a whole more and more return to Him in that 'restoration' of all things through and in Christ which is not a return to any condition of a previous era but which will be accomplished for the first and the last time at the end of time."

Dr. Maloney is a professor of English at Marquette University.

Christian Humanism: Past History and Current Relevance

Dr. Michael F. Maloney

THE agonizing shudder which rocked America in the wake of the Russian satellite successes has brought, inevitably, a widespread demand for a thoroughgoing revaluation of contemporary educational objectives. As always in such instances where the mass mind is affected, the general approach has been more hysterical than rational. Spokesmen for reform, it is true, have insisted almost unanimously that in the haste to remedy our scientific shortcomings nothing could be more fatal than to concentrate too rigidly upon scientific competence alone. Nevertheless it remains clear that modern man is confronted with a particularly treacherous dilemma. On the one hand, as the fragmentation of human knowledge proceeds, the difficulty of mastering single areas mounts; on the other, narrow technical achievement in limited fields when cut off from broad cultural awareness is demonstrably futile or worse in the solution of its own specific problems.

For the Christian who knows history this educational dilemma is less dismaying than it would at first seem. To say this is not to insist smugly that there is nothing new under the sun. Actually, there is a great deal new in our time. The solution of the problem of atomic fission has brought with it virtually unfathomable prospects for future human good. But it has brought more immediate prospects of equally unfathomable human evil. Man now, unquestionably, has it within his power to destroy himself. Does he have the wisdom, or, with the time still available, can he acquire the wisdom to control that power? In answering this question the Catholic has a certain initial certitude. He knows that within the sacred deposit of the Faith is available a complete blueprint for

the affirmative charting of human actions, secular as well as specifically spiritual. But, historically, too, he knows that that sacred deposit has all too frequently not been brought to bear when most needed. Are the failures of the past to be repeated in the present moment of peril?

Definition of History

At this juncture it is well to recall the long history of Christian humanism, which recollection may logically begin with an attempt at definition. The famous statement of Walter Pater in his essay on Pico della Mirandola will, although too restricted, serve as a starting point. The essence of humanism Pater declared is “. . . that belief . . . that nothing which has ever interested living men and women can wholly lose its vitality — no language they have spoken, nor oracle beside which they have hushed their voices, no dream which has once been entertained by actual human minds, nothing about which they have ever been passionate or expended time and zeal.” To this may be added, by way of expansion, Jacques Maritain’s declaration that humanism “. . . essentially tends to render man more truly human and to make his original greatness manifest by causing him to participate in all that can enrich him in nature and in history — ‘by concentrating the world in man,’ as Scheler has almost said, and by ‘dilating man to the world.’ It at once demands that man make use of all the potentialities he holds within himself — his creative powers and the life of the reason, and labor to make the powers of the physical world the instruments of his freedom.” Pico della Mirandola, himself one of the princes among Renaissance humanists, in his oration “On the Dignity of Man,” outlined the hierarchical nature of humanistic knowledge: “Dialectic will appease the tumults of reason made confused and anxious by inconsistencies of statement and sophisms of syllogisms. Natural philosophy will allay the strife and differences of opinion which vex, distract, and wound the spirit from all sides. But she will so assuage them as to compel us to remember that, according to Heraclitus, nature was begotten from war, that it was on this account repeatedly called ‘strife’ by Homer, and that it is not, therefore, in the power of natural philosophy to give us in nature a true, quiet, and unshaken peace but that this is the function and

privilege of her mistress, that is, of holiest theology. She will show us the way and as comrade lead us to her who, seeing us hastening from afar, will exclaim 'Come to me, ye who have labored, Come and I will restore you, Come to me, and I will give you peace which the world and nature cannot give you.'

If, unfortunately, the substantive, *humanism*, without qualification, has connoted, since the eighteenth century, an unrelieved secularism that finds its extreme form in our time in such a thinker as Corliss Lamont, the statement of Pico indicates that this was not true in the Renaissance. Moreover, the humanism of the Renaissance, as the most competent authorities of the present generation of scholars have indicated, was no new birth but only the revitalizing of an already ancient tradition. It is simple truth to say that from its beginning Christian thought absorbed and assimilated to itself the great wealth of pagan culture with such enthusiasm and success that the believer will readily see in the eventuation the hand of Providence. When the fulfillment of the time for the redemption of man had come about the great civilizing work of Greece and Rome had been so performed that upon the solid foundation of natural human culture the supernatural structure of the Christian Church could be reared.

No one has stated more happily the inevitable consonance between the highest reaches of pagan thought and Christianity than the late revered Harvard classicist, E. K. Rand:

It is felt by some that there is an unsurmountable barrier between the pagan authors, with their delight in this temporal and human world, and those of the Middle Ages, who thought of nothing but the world unseen. But if otherworldliness of this sort is Mediaeval, nothing could be more Mediaeval than Cicero and Plato on occasion. If we found in the binding of some Mediaeval tome a strip of parchment bearing in Latin such sentiments as: "That which you humans call life is really death," or "Let us look for the essence of right living in the strength and nobility of the soul and in the utter contempt of all things human," who would not hunt up these passages in St. Bernard or St. Bonaventure? And yet these are the utterances of Marcus Tully, in the spirit of his master Plato. If we called Plato and Cicero the first Christian humanists, we should not be altogether wrong. The paradox of Christian humanism was present in their natures, which were large enough to solve it.

Moreover, as Professor Rand has demonstrated in detail, the assimilation of pagan culture which was an accomplished fact in the Middle Ages had been begun in the very earliest of the Christian centuries. St. Paul was not only a master of rabbinical learning

but of Greek literature as well. In his sermon to the Athenians on the Hill of Mars he sought to show his audience that their own writers had prepared them for the Gospel he brought, and to do this he quoted half an hexameter which is extant in two classical works today: "For we are also his offspring" — τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν — occurs in a poem on astronomy written in the third century B.C. by Aratus and also in a hymn of the stoic philosopher Cleanthes. "In quoting them thus," Professor Rand declared, "St. Paul laid the foundation of Christian humanism."

St. Ambrose

The history of the early ages of the Church is rich with the names of those who collaborated in the creation of Christian humanistic culture. Among these (I am still following in Professor Rand's footsteps) was the great St. Ambrose. Although his family had been Christian for generations, St. Ambrose's first ambition was not for the Church but for the legal career his father had pursued before him. It was not until after he was well launched as a legalist that he turned to the priesthood. He had, consequently, the broad liberal training which Cicero had set down as necessary for the lawyer, a training which continually makes itself evident in his writing. Of the ancient philosophers he quotes most frequently Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, as well as various Stoics and Epicureans. Of the Greek poets he cites Homer and Euripides; of the Romans principally Virgil and Horace, but also Lucan, Plautus, Terence, Martial, and Ovid. But, as Professor Rand notes, it is with Cicero that he has the most intimate contacts. They were both orators, both men in public life. And just as Cicero translated Greek thought into Roman, so Ambrose translated Cicero into Christian. The most obvious example of this is in his *De Officiis Ministrorum* which title is meant to recall Cicero's *De Officiis*. Thus the former is, as Professor Rand indicates, at once an act of homage and a challenge to Cicero!

Cicero wrote his treatise for the benefit of his son Marcus, to hold up before him the ideals of conduct that a young Roman about to enter a career of statesmanship should follow. We should not translate the title "On Duties"; the subject is broader than that. It is the art and science of right living. The title of the work of Panaetius that served Cicero as model suggests better what they were writing about — περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος, "On the fitting," "On what one should do," "On the proper conduct

of young gentlemen." It is one of the mirrors of conduct of which the ancient world had seen a number and the mediaeval world was destined to see more. Now, Ambrose's young gentlemen are candidates for Holy Orders; he adds *Ministrorum* to the title. "And just as Tully wrote for the instruction of his son," he declares, "so I for the informing of my sons. For I love not less those whom I have begotten in the Gospel than if I had reared them in wedlock. For nature is not more strong to love than grace." The plan of Ambrose's argument shows the nature of his challenge. It is, in brief, to take the scheme of the pagan virtues, the pagan definition of decent conduct, and show that its excellent precepts are aboundingly illustrated in the Old Testament, the New Testament, the history of the Christian Church from its inception, and in Christian living at the moment when the Bishop was writing.

St. Jerome

Another of the founders of Christian humanism was St. Jerome. Born a close contemporary of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine in that marvelous fourth century which gave to the world, as the old Roman *imperium* catastrophically disintegrated, the men of genius who were to build the new order, his education was received under the famous scholar Aelius Donatus at Rome and later at Treves, and Aquileia. At Treves the reading of the works of St. Hilary awakened his interest in theology. At Aquileia he came in contact with the first stirrings of Western monasticism on which movement he himself was to have such a fruitful impact.

The familiar story of his illness in Syria where he had gone to study the monasticism of the desert, of the warning voice which declared him to be a Ciceronian, not a Christian, and of his consequent renunciation of the secular world seem to place St. Jerome outside the humanist pale. But this was only an interlude in his life. In the more than thirty years of his pastoral retirement at Bethlehem before his death in 419, he was able, in Rand's words, ". . . to carry out an extensive programme of scholarship, some parts of which he had begun before, that puts him in the front ranks of scholars and humanists of all time." During these years St. Jerome was active in the dual role of teacher and scholar. In the school connected with the monastery which he and Paula had founded he taught the grammar of the ancients which of course involved, in our modern sense, the exposition of literature and literary criticism. His writings included, besides several lives of the saints, his controversial theological tracts aimed at Jovinian and others, such historical writings as the continuation of the

Chronicle of Eusebius; his dictionary of Christian biography, the *De Viris Illustribus*; and, most notable of all, his great Vulgate translation of Scripture and his learned scriptural commentaries.

Unquestionably there were conflicts within St. Jerome and one of these conflicts was that between his native love for literature with a concomitant interest in the human condition and, on the other hand, the strong call that he heard to renounce these as vanities and to strive in lonely isolation for a more intimate union with his Maker. But in a larger sense these oppositions may be considered not as irreconcilable antagonisms at all but as incitations of the tensions by whose actions and counteractions the character of the saint was finally molded. Certainly in that he brought his immense knowledge of the past to bear upon the present, seeking out of the distillation of pagan poetry and philosophy to hasten the birth of the finer flower of Christian culture, he abundantly earned the title of humanist. At least Erasmus, who was not easily satisfied in such matters, thought him such.

St. Augustine

The third and perhaps the greatest of the fourth-century humanists was St. Augustine. The spiritual vicissitudes of St. Augustine involved no such cleavage in his mind between the claims of secular and sacred learning as was the case with St. Jerome. In the gracious depths of his thought the wisdom of the ancient pagan masters finds easy justification as the preparation for the higher wisdom of Revelation. This he states clearly in his *De Doctrina Christiana*. The plan of Plato and Cicero for an educational curriculum of two parts, an introduction and a fulfillment, is his plan except that for them the crowning study is philosophy, for him theology. In his retractions, it is true, he confesses that he had praised the arts too highly since "many saintly men know them not, and some who know them are not saintly men," but he still makes no change in the plan of Christian education he had announced in the *De Doctrina*. The breadth and sanity of his pedagogical views is revealed in a famous statement in the latter work. "He that is a good and true Christian," he wrote, "will understand that his Lord has spoken in whatsoever words he finds the truth."

The three great pagans whose influence is omnipresent in St.

Augustine are Plato, Virgil, and Cicero. The external impact of Cicero was of course early and pervasive, for Augustine, like St. Ambrose, was trained in that same learning on which Cicero, gathering up the teachings of his predecessors, had written one of the most inclusive and influential manuals. As regards ideas, the derivations from Cicero and Plato are often indistinguishable because of Cicero's own indebtedness to Plato. Certainly without Plato the *City of God* is inconceivable. The Greek's conception of a true world of forms of which the phenomenal world is only a copy provided an apt analogue for the Christian thinker's contrast between the human and perishable city and that not built with hands. The merging of Plato and Cicero in St. Augustine has been elucidated by Rand in his discussion of the latter's *De Quantitate Animae*. Here along with much neo-Platonism unknown either to Plato or Cicero is spelled out the ascent of the soul from baser to nobler affections, a theme that goes back ultimately to Plato, but in terms reminiscent of the *Tusculan Disputations*.

Virgil bulks no less large in St. Augustine's thought and for readily discernible reasons. Augustine himself was moved by the same ardent patriotism, the same conviction of the high destiny of ancient Rome that had inspired Virgil. The rule of the Christian emperors was for him but the continuation of the ancient imperial tradition. The pagan empire had been the necessary preparation for the Holy Roman Empire which Augustine helped to create for the Middle Ages. Thus St. Augustine tends to see in Virgil, the spokesmen for the glory of the *fatum Romanum*, a kind of pagan John the Baptist preparing the way for the coming of the Christian dispensation. Unlike the tougher-minded St. Jerome, who ridiculed the idea, Augustine accepted Virgil's fourth Eclogue as a Messianic prophesy, holding that it, like various other heathen writings had adumbrated the coming of Christ. In the *City of God* Virgil is cited often and almost always with approval. More often than not St. Augustine is concerned with showing how, especially in its disregard of the poet's admonition — *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*, "to spare the conquered and put down the proud" — the empire had been unworthy of the Virgilian ideals. Virgil, he implies, in his belief in the one true God approaches the true theology, and the vision of universal and perpetual peace with

which Virgil was enamored was, in the course of being spiritualized, incorporated by Augustine into the *City of God*.

The Sacred and Profane

What these pages have attempted to show, in some detail, is that from its very beginnings, Catholic Christianity subsumed the best of secular culture. To be sure the influence of the Michelet-Burckhardt concept of cultural history still lingers in various stages of vitality in many American universities. Put boldly this concept holds that the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw the rebirth of Western culture after an interval of a thousand years of mediaeval ignorance and superstition, which ignorance and superstition had been actively encouraged by the Catholic Church for its own ends. Happily, during the past half century this view has been exploded not only by such Catholic scholars as Maritain, Gilson, and Toffanin, but by such non-Catholic confreres as Helen Waddell, Douglas, Bush, Wallace K. Ferguson, E. R. Curtius, and many others. The Michelet-Burckhardt fallacy which blandly ignored the continuity of human culture has an obvious explanation. In the general secularization of Western culture since the sixteenth century, the control of education and of the most important media of expression has been in the hands of men, who, however personally unprejudiced and high-minded in their pursuit of truth, were by their training and environment predisposed to look upon the Church as a vast despotism feeding upon credulity and fear. The success of the great Lord Burleigh in identifying the Church for Elizabethan Englishmen with intellectual as well as political tyranny, the triumph of the Enlightenment in eighteenth-century France, and the generally Protestant orientation of Germany since the time of Luther fixed the dominant cultural tone of the three most influential nations of the West. Hence, it became virtually a logical necessity for scholars in explaining the *Zeitgeist* of the post-Renaissance world to insist upon its complete break with the past.

The falsity of such a reading of cultural history has now been amply demonstrated. Far from being a rebirth or rediscovery of ancient humanistic learning, the Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was only one in a series of cultural upsurges which occurred in the West after the fall of the Roman Empire.

I have described, however, superficially, the effort of the finest minds of the fourth century to incorporate the best of the pagan ideals into the Christian culture which rose out of the ruins of the ancient world. The migration of the tribes which brought the true Dark Ages for Europe was scarcely over when, under the leadership of Charlemagne and Alcuin, the unending process of assimilation was begun in the so-called Carolingian renaissance of the ninth century. How successfully this work of rescuing European culture from the wreckage of the barbarian invasions was achieved the Aristotelian renaissance of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries attests. Just as the fourth century was largely Platonic in orientation, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were (though of course not wholly) Aristotelian and when the work of the Christian Aristotelians of the latter period was completed the philosophical heritage of the ancient world had been made one with mediaeval thought. What was truly new about the succeeding renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was not that it marked a rebirth of a long-lost pagan culture but that, shifting its major emphasis from the philosophic to the literary, it set out to recover the glory of ancient *belles-lettres*, known but only imperfectly known, in the Middle Ages.

The Religious and the Secular United in the Christian

If there is any inference that may be reasonably drawn from the preceding pages, it is that Catholic Christianity knows no essential conflict between sacred and secular learning. From the penny catechism to the most abstruse theological volumes, it is true, the burden of the Church's teaching is that man is born to be a saint. True, too, it teaches (I have quoted St. Augustine on this point) that saints can be made without the aid of human culture. Hagiography abounds in the confusion of the learned before the holiness of the simple and humble. But while exceptions are frequent, lest the salt should lose its savor, in the pursuit of her ends the Church has steadfastly employed the ordinary means at hand for her extraordinary ends. The Christian is not so much the citizen of two worlds, the profane and the sacred, as he is himself one world in which the profane and sacred meet and are reconciled. As a mortal creature he lives in the world of time. As an immortal

spirit, he looks to a world of eternity. There is no inconsonant dichotomy in this situation. Unlike the Manichaeon, the Christian does not believe in an evil God who creates the temporal world and a virtuous God who creates the spiritual, but in one God, the Father of all. The world in which he lives his temporal existence, then, is not evil. The use he makes of it determines whether it is evil or good for him.

It has been, I repeat, the mark of the Christian humanist through the ages that he employs profane learning as the preface to sacred aspiration. "First the natural, then the supernatural," rightly understood, is a profound maxim of the spiritual life. The cardinal virtues, prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude, are the virtues of Plato's good man, quite apart from Christian revelation. They are also the bedrock upon which the specifically theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity, rest. In the sense in which, following Maritain, I am using it, the term, Christian humanist applies to one who seeks to develop all his natural powers but more specifically in this context his intellectual powers to the highest degree of which he is capable. Human learning is, by the very nature of things, to a considerable degree traditional, since if the sum total of man's knowledge is to increase, one generation must stand upon the shoulders of its predecessor. In that traditional knowledge the contribution of the Greek and Latin thinkers and poets must bulk large, since in their views of man's essential humanity they had arrived at unchanging truth.

For the Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a humanist was a man versed in the classical heritage. Still, the conditions of education change and for the twentieth century, since a firsthand knowledge of classical learning has been lost save for the specialist, our conception of the humanist must also change. I think for the future we shall have to be content to identify the Christian humanist as one who joins the fulfilling truths of Revelation to the ancient classical conception of man's nature, however that latter conception may have come to him. Most likely he will have met it in the study of the literature of the language of his own race. Increasingly he will derive it from the body of studies that forms the core of the liberal-arts curriculum — foreign languages and literature, history, social studies. But however he comes

to it, he will be animated by a conviction of the twofold nature of man. Moreover, he will be convinced that the dualism of which he is conscious in his own person distinguishes the universe in which he lives. He will know from the testimony of history how profoundly aware the wisest men of all ages have been of the mysteries of the knowledge that eluded them. Far from despising the world, he will look upon it with reverence, since it comes forth from the Master's hand. In the scientific age in which we are placed it may be his greatest service to read the riddle of creation for the natural mysteries it contains while remaining always conscious that these natural mysteries are but the vesture that now reveals, now hides the Eternal nature.

Christian Responsibility

When we think how the great seminal Christian minds of the fourth and subsequent centuries, notably the ninth, thirteenth, and seventeenth, and in a modest way, the twentieth, have shaped the cultures of their epochs by bringing to effective synthesis the wisdom of Revelation and the best of secular learning we have before us the pattern of the perpetual responsibility of the Christian intellectual. That responsibility was never heavier than it is today. The unending expansion of the frontiers of physical knowledge demands the presence there of men who are scientists without fear and Christians without reproach. It is perhaps true that the startling immediacy of the scientific revolution of our time has created an atmosphere initially favorable to Christianity. But unless that situation is exploited there is no certainty that it will always persist. While less sturdy souls may be inclined to quail before the prospect of possible universal destruction, it is well to recall that many of the most glorious achievements of the Christian past have been the product of centuries seemingly equally fraught with disaster. In the fourth century while the Empire disintegrated and the bastions of the ancient culture went down, the Jeromes and Ambroses and Augustines carried that culture to new and unparalleled triumphs under the banner of the Cross. Many of the supreme achievements of the Middle Ages were won during epochs when it seemed Christendom must fall before Islam. It may be that something of that heroism will be demanded of the Christian

humanists of our time. There are many kinds of martyrdom not the least magnificent of which is that of the thinker who sacrifices himself that Truth may be heard where formerly it was silent. If there is to be any intellectual justification (I do not speak of parochial or sociological justification for these are different matters) of the far-flung efforts of Catholic higher education in America in our time, it must be in its ability to create and to inspire scholars who, quietly and unobtrusively, will take their place in the ranks of the seekers for light. Whether as scientists or as formal humanists, they will give testimony and perhaps most effectively in the search into the shadows where the Light joys in hiding Himself.



According to Christian doctrine, man, endowed with a social nature, is placed here on earth in order that he may spend his life in society, and under an authority ordained by God, that he may develop and evolve to the full all his faculties to the praise and glory of his Creator; and that, by fulfilling faithfully the duties of his station, he may attain to temporal and eternal happiness.

Pius XI

The author is chairman of the department of humanities at St. Michael's College, Winooski, Vt.

Operation Upgrade

One Step (Not Giant) Toward a Humanities Program

Dr. Henry George Fairbanks

CHRISTIAN humanism which, for all its distortions, is imbedded in the very fabric of Western tradition invites profound research and no less profound speculation. Since others well qualified to contribute to this issue may be expected to trace its origins or (more boldly) to define its terms, I will content myself with a more modest, but no less necessary, problem — the practical relation of humanism to one concrete program of studies designed to reflect and sustain something of a traditionally humanistic curriculum. That program, pursued at St. Michael's College, Winooski, Vermont, for the past six years, is entitled "The Life and Thought of Western Man" and consists in an attempted integration of organically related areas of study, hopefully leading to the formation of the well-rounded student. The course is a compulsory one (three hours per week for three years) for all students; and, though involving history and art surveys, focuses its emphasis on that literature of the West which, in one way or another, projects a specifically "Western" attitude toward the nature and end of both man and society. It is on these readings that we mean to concentrate lest the knight-errancy of crusading culture propel us into the Dark Wood of Ambition.

The humanities reading list (totaling some 36 titles) is properly considered the "core" of "The Life and Thought of Western Man," I, II, and III. For not only do the books bulk centrally among the materials used to delineate the major lines of Western development

(i.e., in the amount of time scheduled for their presentation), but — when presented most effectively — they are both preceded by period history surveys and consolidated by period art lectures. The centrality, therefore, is literal in materials and scheduling.

There is no denying that a certain inevitable arbitrariness has entered into selection of these titles. But the same could be said of any list, bound to reflect the penchant or bias of its author. In this particular list, however, the intrusion of personal preference is checked (if not eliminated) by the representative character of the titles and by the breadth of forms and subject matter represented. All of the recommended works are frequent listings in a wide variety of Great Books courses, and many of them are “repeaters” in all of the recognized lists of Western classics. And while all of the books, from *Job* to *Death of a Salesman*, are unified by their relation to the central theme of Western development, they express a multifaceted reflection of this movement in types as diverse as epic poetry and economic treatise, philosophical dialogue and biological thesis. The very scope of the survey not only militates against subject or area specialization,¹ but (inasmuch as it actually constitutes for all students the closest approximation to comparative literature surveys in our program and to cultural surveys for most of our students) it provides an experience in aesthetic appreciation denied otherwise to science and business concentrators. For although the program is not, strictly speaking, a literary or art course, it furnishes over a period of three years enough variety of forms and criticism to create some sensitivity to aesthetic values for the nonspecialist in these American-neglected fields. Inasmuch as this neglect is widespread in a mass-pragmatic society,² and inasmuch as it occasions a serious imbalance in personal development and a vital loss of perspective, the course might be justified on these grounds alone.

Although subsidiary aims, like those indicated above, result in definite cultural enrichments which are valuable *per se*, the pri-

¹ Pursuit, concurrently, of traditional concentrations (e.g., history, English, political science, etc.) preserves mere breadth from degenerating into shallowness; for the course is not designed to displace conventional, necessary concentrations, but (a) to *integrate* them for all and (b) to *introduce* their materials and techniques to specializing students who would otherwise remain ignorant of them.

² See the “cultural poverty” of the otherwise bright chemistry or education major, student-concentrator today, leader-specialist tomorrow.

mary purpose of "The Life and Thought of Western Man" is to acquaint the student with the nature, sources, and state of his cultural heritage through an integrated study of the related materials of history, literature, and art.

A. What Are These Great Books Which, Studied in a Sequence of History and Art, Afford an Intelligible Picture of the Development of Western Man?

Sophomore Year ("The Life and Thought of Western Man," I)

FIRST SEMESTER (Ancient World)		SECOND SEMESTER (Christian-Medieval World)	
BIBLE	— Old Testament (Sel.)	St. Augustine	— <i>Confessions</i>
Homer	— <i>Iliad</i>	Beowulf	
Sophocles	— <i>Oedipus, Antigone</i>	St. Thomas	— <i>De Lege</i>
Plato	— <i>Apology, Symposium, Phaedo</i>	Dante	— <i>Inferno</i>
Plutarch	— <i>Lives</i> (Alexander, Caesar)	Chaucer	— <i>Canterbury Tales</i>
Virgil	— <i>Aeneid</i>	Everyman, Second	Shepherds' Play

Junior Year ("The Life and Thought of Western Man," II)

FIRST SEMESTER (Renaissance)		SECOND SEMESTER (Enlightenment and Revolution)	
Machiavelli	— <i>The Prince</i>	Locke	— <i>Second Treatise of Govt.</i>
Montaigne	— <i>Essais</i> (with permission)	Pope	— <i>Essay on Criticism, On Man, The Rape of the Lock</i>
Marlowe	— <i>Doctor Faustus</i>	<i>The Federalist</i>	
Shakespeare	— <i>King Lear</i>	Romantic Poets	— Selections
Milton	— <i>Paradise Lost</i> (I and II), <i>Areopagitica, On Education</i>		

Senior Year ("The Life and Thought of Western Man," III)

FIRST SEMESTER (1800-1860)		SECOND SEMESTER (1860-1950)	
Goethe	— <i>Faust, I</i>	Darwin	— <i>The Origin of Species</i>
Emerson	— <i>Essays</i>	Turgenev	— <i>Fathers and Children</i>
Thoreau	— <i>Walden, Civil Disobedience</i>	Hardy	— <i>Return of the Native</i>
Melville	— <i>Moby Dick</i>	Papal Labor Encyclicals	
Twain	— <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	Joyce	— <i>Portrait of the Artist</i>
Marx	— <i>Communist Manifesto</i>	Lewis	— <i>Babbitt</i>
Dickens	— <i>Great Expectations</i>	Miller	— <i>Death of a Salesman</i>

B. *What Broad Outlines in the Development of Western Man to His Present Estate Are Perceptible Through Such a Survey?*

We speak of "West," of course, as a cultural complex surpassing a merely geographical West (viz., Australia and the Philippines) and taking its material origins even from basic contributions of non-Western (Near Eastern) civilizations of the Fertile Crescent. But, after having received its material base and initial impulse from ancient Egyptian-Mesopotamian cradles of society, it became a literally European center whence, over centuries of gradual definition, it emerged as a separate and special culture expanding dynamically until its outlook and features (modified by the accidents of local situations) were extended globally by unique colonial and missionary energies. Within this West — whether fifth-century Athens, thirteenth-century Paris, or eighteenth-century Philadelphia — there were always strong forces operative for: the acknowledgment of individual responsibility, the reliance on human reason as a trustworthy measure of experience, and for what Professor Josef Pieper has called a "mundane spirituality."

From these, imbedded, if subconscious, attitudes were formulated distinct propositions about the nature of man and his place in the universe which became concretized, however slowly and incompletely, in such characteristic manifestations as: the constitutions, as well as the ideal of democracy; the technology, as well as the theories of science; the balance between spiritual and temporal of which the bijuridical order is but one example, and the Incarnation and Redemption another — all rising from, making for, and preserving a unique definition of the nature of human fulfillment. Into the evolution of this sensitive balance between the potentialities and the limitations of man, and the richness and finiteness of the material world, went what is commonly identified as the Greek intellectual heritage, the Roman pragmatism and passion for order, and the Judaeo-Christian religion. And from them, in turn, emerged a remarkable unifying world view, dominant once throughout the Western orbit and even today, after centuries of distortion, deviation, and fragmentation, still culturally determinant. Such a heritage lies behind the difference between St.

Francis of Assisi and Gautama, as well as between the political *credo's* of Joseph Stalin³ and Dwight D. Eisenhower. To ascertain whether the gap seems greater or lesser in the twentieth century than in the thirteenth, it should be helpful, at least, to trace the fluctuations and current of this specifically Western stream of development.

Broadly speaking, the movement is ascending and then descending — ascending toward synthesis and descending, afterward, toward atomization. But because of the pejorative connotations of the word *fall* when opposed to *rise* (the implicit assumptions of “inferiority by comparison” being unavoidable), I recommend that, initially, the rhythm be visualized as *arsis* and *thesis*: the coalescence of the religious, rational, and republican motifs into an outlook infusing the whole of a society by supplying and integrating its basic postulates, then the rending of that unity *qua* unity as the component elements jeopardize their delicate balance by intensive (and even splendid) expression of special members to the dislocation of the total pattern.

Such an approach avoids any arrogant assumption of medieval superiority sloganized in the title, *The Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries* (reef of woe for the apologist-historian), while it does not preclude the conclusion that cultural integrity is essential to the revitalization of the West, or the observation that a diminishing unity has been marked by recognizable stages. Among these are the steady drift from a theocentric to a progressively homocentric orientation; the displacement of metaphysical by empirical modes of analysis, and the abandonment of any universally valid absolutes for the flux and chaos of relativism.

This is not to say that the history of the West is one of progressive degeneration from a Golden Age summit. So-called “Golden Ages” are usually heavily encrusted with the guilt of legend. Some of the most dazzling achievements specific to the West were realized long after the decline of cultural unity, and we have no reason to expect that other brilliant efflorescences may not yet

³ Behind the essentially non-Western bias of the Russian spirit, notwithstanding geographical position and ethnological composition, lie the special legacies of the Roman Empire of the East and Byzantium, rigidified by the “Iron Curtain” of the Great Schism of 1054. More than physical vastness or Tartar heritage these explain the failures of Peter the Great and the mentality of Russian delegates to the UN.

illuminate areas of the Western world. The fact of one and the possibility of the other are eminently proper subjects for our study.

Certainly the practical machinery advocated in *The Federalist* for the adaptation of republican forms of government to eighteenth-century America is superior to either the organization of the Greek city-state or the medieval parliament; but whether the principles of democracy have not been obscured or weakened in the interval by Lockean rationalism, Rousseauian sentimentalism, or the sociological impact of industrialism is another question. Closely following the "rugged" (often insulating) individualism generated by New World opportunities and the rationalizations of *laissez faire* has come the equal-and-opposite reaction of socialistic drives to protect the many from the rapacity of the few — with the result that former concepts of human dignity are seriously challenged today within the West by proponents of a totalitarian control historically associated with Orient rather than Occident. In the rootless intellectual (MacLeish's "irresponsible" and the masses' "egg-head"), no less than in the alienated artist (darling of the cliques but spokesman for no community — indeed, hardly communicating at all through the walls of subjectivism), the schism in the Western soul is evident. Where the marvels of applied science — favored in a special way by Western regard for the mind and the material world — have led to the awesome powers of atomic energy, the amorization of research consequent on the divorce of science from philosophy or religion has posed a terrifying problem of responsibility for the right direction of such forces. Nor have the breathtaking developments of modern industrialism, with their spectacular elevation of standards of living, been unaccompanied by an engulfing materialism, softened initially by the humanitarianism of secular liberalism, but exposed nakedly today in the crude pragmatism of mass culture.

After the slow, painful fusion of Greco-Roman-Judaeo-Christian elements toward a short-lived period of dynamic integrity in the High Middle Ages, Western culture has been characterized by a movement from unity to disunity: from a God-centered world to the conception of man as the measure of all things; from a society in which religion and philosophy provided the norms for man's guidance to one in which empirical science asserted complete

independence and authority; from a view of an ordered world intelligently (and intelligibly) directed to one of relativism and intellectual confusion; from a communal, all-pervasive culture to a society of compartmentalizations and specializations. In this world, religion is for Sundays or for civic rituals, and restricted to the pulpit. Art is for the wealthy or the women, when not consigned wholly to the cultivation of the bohemian. Skepticism succeeds certitude; confusion, direction; chaos, form; socialism, democracy. Having rejected the orientation of his middle ground — between God and Nature — for the illusory independence of a deific-aspiring ego, Faustian man has flown deliberately into a blinding sun only to be plunged into unexpected, encompassing depths — submitting self to the yoke of State control, bewailing self in the literature of pessimism, mocking self in the grotesqueries of formless art.

The demonstration of lost unity is the basic lesson of any survey of Western society. Whether unity is retrievable, or whether the offshoots of an ancestral Western matrix, cut off from sustaining familial associations, can propagate their identity and influence when Western power has contracted externally and Western values are challenged internally — this is the disturbing question of our times. But such disturbance begets self-criticism and that, in turn, makes for self-knowledge. In knowing who we are and what our birthright is, we may be aided in resolving the frustrations of cultural schizophrenia and preserved from selling our heritage for a mess of pottage.

The Great Books “core” of “The Life and Thought of Western Man,” combined with the other features of the course, enables us to begin that inventory, humbly, perhaps, but concretely and, by its very limitations, specially adapted to the capacities of initial student inquiry. Without the broad perspectives of such basic orientation, specific, if superior, analysis ventures dangerously toward the labyrinths and *cul-de-sac* of that specialization which is the curse of our times and the antipodes of the humanistic spirit. Some such step is required to offset the laxity and inherent skepticism of the “free” elective system.

THE STRANGER

Why do you sit apart, old man,
from these agreeing, others needling,
you with unbuttered bread you're nibbling?
I see you pocket it, and turn
your face toward sky as if content
with a kingly feast; have you grown deaf
to raucousness and blasphemy?
Who walks beside you as you go
in silences while all about
whips of words flail summer air?
Chin raised a little and ear leaned
away from noise's vortex, where —
how far away, how close — are choirs
that sing to you?

I hear the shouts
of discord in the city square.
Christ, how false, how poor am I,
dressed in my finely tailored rags,
let good misfortune shred me clean —
I who envy that gray, bent man
dressed in his age-green, regal suit.
Older than he in weariness,
paupered by insecurity,
let me grow quickly ancient; Christ,
let me be washed and young again.

Joseph Joel Keith

Principles of CHRISTIAN HUMANISM

- I The final goal of man is transcendent, supernatural; but it is a goal of *man*, a fulfilment of his nature.
- II Grace does not destroy nature, it perfects it. It does not overlay it, it permeates and transfigures the whole of it.
- III The mission of Christ is always the same: "to save that which perished." And that which perished was not only a soul but the whole man, as well as the material universe in which context all men are to be saved.
- IV Christ is the origin and source as well as the supreme instance of Humanism. Apart from Him there is no human perfection. Man is not perfectly human until he is divine. This divinization of man through grace is the necessary, obligatory goal of all humans and, therefore, the one essential business of any form of humanism.
- V Ever since the Incarnation no man is permitted to scorn or disregard anything human or natural. Human wholeness is holiness.
- VI No man may take care of his own soul and let the world go hang. No man becomes perfect by seeking perfection directly; it is a by-product of his human effort to glorify God by human work well done.

VII Man should not flee from the world to be free of it; he should enter into it to transform it; he should not scorn the secular, he should integrate it with the spiritual; he should not aim at rejection but at consecration.

VIII Man must not hate the world; he must turn toward it with redemptive healing love. He must expend himself with toil, pain, the tears and sweat of mental and manual labor toward the transformation and perfection of the world.

IX Man must have a "long view" of reality, not a timid and limited vision. The danger of technical progress, involving as it often does, dehumanizing conditions of work, ought not to lead man to despair, but to a deeper wisdom and a more intelligent control of things.

X Human perfection means freedom. And there is no freedom without *detachment* — detachment from all that is not God. But detachment is not a flight from the world, nor a disinclination to creatures, nor a safe noncommittalism. It is, rather, a daring, solicitous, warmhearted, unselfish love of everything. Detachment does not mean that you love nothing but God; it means that you love all in God — the manifold in the One. It does not mean that you learn to love creatures less and less, it means that you learn to love them more and more — but selflessly, as part of your vast, undivided love of God.



- XI The spirit of poverty (detachment) is not easily come by. It demands a reasonable, generous program of mortification as well as periodic withdrawals into solitude. It also involves the readiness of man to sacrifice himself and his temporal works to the glory of God. That God may, indeed, require of him such a sacrifice of temporal achievements inspires even greater energy and devotion toward temporal affairs. Should he be asked to lay his gift on the sacrificial altar it will be the most perfect his hands can offer.
- XII A man must base his life upon principles of sanctity, not principles of safety. Dangerous territory must be traversed, while the delicate Christian balance is preserved.

Father William, O.C.D.

The principles of docility to divine grace outlined below by Fr. Denis, who is student master and professor of philosophy at Holy Hill, Wis., are not intended to be exhaustive — indeed, to try to be exhaustive in the theology of grace is to run the risk of missing the point. The point here is to state some of the basic laws of divine grace in its relation to our human nature, as found in the Christian philosophy and dogmatic theology of St. Thomas Aquinas (Summa Theologica, I-II, q. 109) and the spiritual theology of St. John of the Cross (Spiritual Canticle, Verses 12-13).

Grace: The Christ-Life in Us

Father Denis of the Holy Family, O.C.D.

“WITH Christ I am nailed to the Cross, and I live, now not I, but Christ lives within me” (Gal. 2:20).

Not so long ago, as I was leafing through a family album from the past century among a collection of Americana, I could not suppress a certain fearful admiration of some of the characters portrayed. There was bewhiskered Uncle Glasgow, clear-eyed, almost defiant with a strong, protruding jawbone. Aunt Emma, prim and stern, came next, followed by some of her children, so many of whom seemed to have died in babyhood. I couldn't help but think how much their posterity has changed in outlook and belief, since the austere days of the Puritans, not always for the better; but then and there I thanked God for the Catholic doctrine of nature and grace.

Must It Be Either/Or?

The day of the Puritans has certainly vanished from the American scene, but I am not so sure that the day of the “good pagan” is any better; and I write these lines in the sincere conviction that the practical solution of the thorny problem in our spiritual life (the problem of the correct emphases on nature and grace) is not going to be found in a formula such as “*either nature or grace must give*

way"; for, in fact, neither can or will give way. God has placed them here to stay. The answer will rather be found in the realization that *both nature and grace play an essential but distinct part in our spiritual lives*; for is not this the meaning of the imitation of Christ, our Saviour, who was neither only God nor mere man but both God and man? Christ is divinely human and humanly divine.

Moreover, this problem is the crux of a multitude of questions facing our American Christian civilization today; education, politics, the relations between Church and State, and even our international relations depend on our understandings of the psychology of man's nature and the laws of God's grace.

Grace, Man's Greatest Glory

Grace is the most glorious thing in human existence. I know that this is the doctrine of St. Thomas — but much more than that, *it is the very substance of the Gospel*, the good news of Christ Jesus, our Lord; and yet, how many know more about grace than that it is a gift of God that we have to have, a "state" in which we have to stay?

Grace is not only a state; it is Life, Light, and Love. Grace is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit *living in us, enlightening us, loving us as their dear children*. Grace is the purpose of the Incarnation, the Church, and the Sacraments, as well as prayer. It is the greatest unifying, consolidating, healing, pacifying, and beatifying influence that exists. It is true that grace is mysterious; but we *do* know that *it is*, and we know from God's revelation what it can do; we also know (dimly and as through a veil) something of *what it is*. Why then should we be sad or dissatisfied because the reality far exceeds our comprehension?

The Extreme Theories: Puritanism and Naturalism

As in most human concepts of the relationship between two entities, views of nature and grace range all the way from the denial of nature (practically found in Jansenism or its Protestant counterpart, Puritanism) to the denial of grace (naturalism). The first school of thought makes some men "naturally superior" and rather self-sufficient creatures. You know the type: "Man-is-captain-

of-his-fate-and-master-of-his-soul"; or the type of the Pharisee in the Gospel: "I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not as the rest of men," etc., etc., etc.

The reaction to this view takes on many different masks — the "realism" of much that is American literature and Hollywood drama; or the "man-is-a-rather-high-powered-animal" school of thought; or the "scientific" view that has done numerous operations on the human carcass without finding one single soul.

As in most extremes, the more idealistic tendency is probably the more dangerous; idealists are usually more susceptible to diabolical influence, and harder to shake therefrom. Satan has transformed himself into many an "angel of enlightenment."

Both extremes must be avoided, or else risk the terrible torture of conscience and even ruined lives, huge unhappiness. There are happy mediums called the moral virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude which have a job to do here, but they are not *the* solution. *The* solution is the virtue of charity, and of charity there is no happy medium, no measure.

Nature: Pure or Fallen?

Moreover, another question arises here which must be cleared up before proceeding. What kind of nature are we discussing here: Adam's nature, or human nature wounded by original sin? Many a man reading the *Imitation of Christ* may come away confused to know that

the motions of nature and grace . . . are much opposed to each other. Nature ever seeks itself; is crafty and ensnares and deceives many, works for its own comfort, and seeks its own gain and profit from others (Gerard Groote, Bk. II, Part 3, Chap. 47).

Religion students, especially, learning from theology that "grace perfects nature but does not destroy it," find this text a little difficult to understand and appreciate. What nature is the author discussing, Adam's nature before the fall or our human nature today? He is not actually talking about either, but about the *inclination of fallen man's will* to choose the lesser good, the more comfortable path, the less difficult choice — or no choice at all. For ever since Eden, there has been a conflict between grace and this *inclination* of fallen nature — not, mind you, between the ra-

tional will or the "higher part" of man, human nature as it *should* be. *The real conflict, then, is between inordinate love of creatures and the love of the Creator*; and it is this conflict that grace alone can win, or else we will go down in eternal defeat, to hell. (The author of the *Imitation* is writing poor theory but good practical advice. However, since this sort of theory is at the root of Luther's mistaken conception of *the essential corruption of human nature*, it is necessary to understand the philosophy of St. Thomas on this point (I, q. 83), cited by Trent: that in fallen man "free will is not extinct," although "weakened and inclined to evil" (Denziger, 793).

Nature Is Good — But Not Enough

Human nature, even though weakened by original sin, and the human will, even though inclined to evil, is still good. There is a fourfold wound in our present make-up — *ignorance* in our minds, selfishness in our wills, sensuality in our desires, and a certain sensitivity about us that makes us quick to anger, slow to forgive and forget. But granted that such is the real case, we are still made in the image of God, and if we turn to Him, He in His mercy has promised to turn to us. In practice, this conversion is to His Church and the Sacraments and prayer, the means of grace.

Again, you can theorize all day about all religions being the same in God's eyes — but the fact of the matter is that complete and full-blown grace, happiness, and spiritual health are not found, in practice, in most. Many people are holy *in spite of* their religion, not because of it. This is because Christ has confided the Christ-life of grace to His Church, and none but she can understand the various motions of nature and grace. Speak to the theologians, the philosophers, or the simple faithful of any denomination. Ask them what is *the mainspring of their soul-life*. Ask them if they find that mainspring in their Church or outside of it; and then you will know which is directed by the Spirit of grace.

The point of this whole matter is that *nature, no matter how good, how liberal, how hard working it is, is not enough*; and the sooner we Americans appreciate this fact, the more effective our natural goodness will become, for then it will have an opening to grace that alone has the peaceful power that we seek in vain from man.

Moreover, grace has certain laws; it does not just happen. It is something which responds to God's laws, and in particular to the following:

I. *Grace is born in baptism, nourished in the Holy Eucharist, strengthened in Confirmation, healed in Confession, and helped by prayer.*

II. *Grace grows in proportion to our love, not necessarily our knowledge.* The most important person in Catholic theology is the *vetula*, the little old woman, who knows little about what grace is, much about how it acts upon her conscience, and how it grows with the love of God and souls.

III. *The following of Christ is the secret of growth in grace.* The best advice I have ever heard in this regard came from the lips of an old priest: "Live like Christ — naturally but with a supernatural motive."

Life must be governed by the moral virtues — by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude; but without the motivation and sustenance of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, human virtues are not enough. However, moral virtue perfected by theological faith and hope and all of these, co-ordinated by charity, will bring us the happy, grace-ful life; and charity will bring the gifts of the Holy Spirit to act upon the soul, helping us to live a divinely human life, i.e., the Christ-life.

IV. *Human nature is unable to merit either the first grace (of conversion) or the last grace (of final perseverance).* All too often we forget that God, too, has a free will. He will answer our prayers and our penances aimed at gaining grace for ourselves and others, but like any good Father, He likes to be asked.

V. *Mortification of the sinful tendencies of the vices is a means to grace, not an end.* In other words, all penitential and prayerful practice has to be governed by prudence and motivated by divine love; otherwise it is unbalanced and has no merit.

VI. *The Holy Spirit of grace enlightens us in direct proportion to our recollection in faith, for faith is the proximate means of obtaining grace and charity.* Hence the importance of "living by faith," having "the mind of Christ," "thinking with the Church" of Christ, developing devotion to the Mother of Christ.

Our Sputnik

Here, then, is the life for which man was created. Grace is the Christ-life of souls.

Here, moreover, is the secret weapon that alone can convert the Russians, stabilize the peace, strengthen faltering hands to work for the common good, dry the tears, and erase the hatreds that stand in the way of the good life, the brotherhood of men. In short, this is what the whole world is seeking — a sort of Christian sputnik, the key to peace and to victory.

NEW CHRISTIAN HUMANISM

A new age of Christendom, if it is to come, will be an age of reconciliation of that which was disjoined, the age of a "secular" Christian civilization, in which temporal things, philosophical and scientific reason, and civil society will enjoy their autonomy and at the same time recognize the quickening and inspiring role that spiritual things, religious faith, and the Church play from their higher plane. Then a Christian philosophy of life would guide a community vitally, not decoratively Christian, a community of human rights and of the dignity of the human person, in which men belonging to diverse racial stocks and to diverse spiritual lineages would work at a temporal common task which was truly human and progressive.

Jacques Maritain

The author is the famous English Dominican who wrote The Heart of Man, The Divine Pity, etc.

Holiness and Humanness

Father Gerald Vann, O.P.

SOMETIMES one is given the experience, humbling and inspiring, of meeting saints. There is no mistaking them: they are filled, on the one hand, with a quiet but profound sense of their sinfulness (a sinfulness imperceptible to everyone else), on the other hand with a vivid, infectious joy the source of which is the divine thing inside them but which, at the same time, is in the most down-to-earth way human, going as it does with a quick, lively interest in, love of, and sympathy for people, things, and all that is going on around them. There are other people who seem to be equally sin-free, prayerful, heroic, but who yet seem to lack the essential saint quality; and if you ask yourself why that is, you find that the answer lies in a certain remoteness, aloofness: you never really establish contact; and, though they talk or listen quite kindly, you feel that their attention is only fractional — the part of them that matters most is not with you but somewhere in the clouds. (But the Christian saint is passionately in love with God and man alike.) What has gone wrong?

Purpose of Grace

Perhaps we shall find an answer to that question if we consider two phenomena to be met with in modern Catholic life which might seem contradictory but do in fact exist simultaneously. One is the idea that the purpose of what we call grace is simply and solely to help us to keep the Ten Commandments. (Let us face the fact that the word “grace” has become jargon, and therefore a bromide: this fundamental, and catastrophic, mistake might be less common if, sometimes at least, we talked not of grace but of the gift of divine life, or even of “super-vitality.” . . .) To think thus is to

miss the whole point of the New Dispensation, of what our Lord means by being reborn, of all that St. Paul has to say of "newness of life"; it is, for instance, to think of charity as almsgiving, whereas it means being ablaze, incandescent, with love. Of course we need divine help if we are to keep the Commandments; but in themselves they are not specifically Christian: they are the "natural law": and being Christians, being "other Christs," means immeasurably more than that.

The second phenomenon is this: you will find people who seem deeply pious, devout in prayer and untiring in good works, models of rectitude and pillars of the parish, but who lack not just heroic sanctity, heroic charity, but the most ordinary, commonplace, *natural* quality of kindness — and even (what is less demanding) kindness.

Seemingly contradictory, the two things are in fact complementary: what unites them is an attitude of mind called negativism. Many modern Catholics think of the Christian life as implying (*a*) a certain amount of churchgoing, saying of prayers, pious practices, and (*b*) *not* breaking the Commandments, which in practice boils down to *not* breaking the sixth Commandment and the commandments of the Church (at least the one about Friday abstinence). What follows all too easily is that the regular churchgoer (and Friday fish-eater) who is also continent will feel that all is well and will develop a sense of conscious rectitude, that monstrosity of the "devout life" — and any normal "reasonable mortal beast" who has to spend a day in the company of conscious rectitude will inevitably find himself longing for the company of weak, human sinners with a little natural kindness, and humbleness, in their hearts. But what follows further is that growth in holiness will be taken to mean becoming more and more given to prayers and pious practices and more and more free of any sense entanglements; and the tragic fact is that so many really good people, humble as well as devout, will regard this as the ideal and will follow it firmly and perhaps heroically — and so will achieve something that looks very like holiness but is in fact inhuman.

To be in love with God, to be in love with His creation: that is the Christian ideal. "By this shall men know that you are My disciples, that you have love one for another." St. Paul says, "I

would have you aglow with the Spirit": the word is *ferventes* in the Latin, which means, as Msgr. Knox put it, "always on the boil." Father Vincent McNabb, that great and holy Friar Preacher, used to say, "If you don't love the world, don't preach to the world: preach to yourself." St. Francis preached to the birds. Some of the saints wept, with joy and sorrow, at the loveliness of Nature's praise of God. What has gone wrong with us? Simply this: that to be aglow with the Spirit means to be "a burning and a shining light," to be filled through and through with the Light and the Fire, whereas we tend to think of it as meaning having a brilliant blaze of light in an attic while the rest of the house is left in darkness.

Absorbing God

We are children of our age; and our age — our modern Western society — is an appallingly impoverished one despite all the marvels, the material and scientific advantages, of modern life because in it the human personality tends to dwindle away to a fraction of itself. Modern man, unless he is very lucky or very enlightened, leads a vestigial, a crepuscular life. Cooped up in vast towns, remote from Nature and natural things, forced to earn a living by dull, uncreative work, often sick in body or mind or both, thinking of progress in terms of technics, of faster locomotion and improved plumbing, reading little more than the newspapers and the pulp magazines; hardly aware that the life of the mind can mean more than the acquiring of utilitarian, scientific, commercial facts, finding relaxation mostly either in unimaginative sensuality or in passive amusements: it is hardly surprising if such a society is sick, neurotic: and neurotic because uncreative, and uncreative because uncontemplative. (People are often amazed if you tell them that etymologically the word "school" means leisure: they have forgotten the injunction, *Vacate et videte*, "Be still and see" — look, listen, absorb; they have forgotten what Aristotle knew, that the mind can "*become*, in a manner, all things," and they think of the educated man, not as one who has become wise through a deep and silent communion with reality, but as one with a well-stocked brain pan.)

Catholics inevitably tend to be influenced by the values of the

world in which they live. Consequently they will tend to think of becoming a good Catholic in terms of factual knowledge — knowing all the catechism answers; of faster locomotion — more and more good works and pious practices, sodalities, novenas, pilgrimages, parochial committees; and of improved plumbing — more and more devices for getting rid of vices. And so perhaps they miss the *unum necessarium*, the one essential thing. “Mary hath chosen the better part”: and what was she doing? She was doing nothing; she was neither going nor getting, she was neither acquiring factual knowledge nor engaged in good works: she was sitting still and absorbing God.

The Whole Man Enriched by Grace

Grace, divine life, is not at a tangent to nature; grace does not live in the attic while nature inhabits the rest of the house. Grace works in and through nature, transforming it; which means working in and through and transforming these hands and feet, this head and heart, these senses, these emotions, this thinking, this willing, this living of every moment as it comes. There will be, there must be, some moments when everything is excluded except the awareness of God: when hands and feet and head and heart are concerned only with his worship: your feet take you to the altar rails; your hands are joined in prayer or hold the paten; your ears listen to words, “May the Body of our Lord . . .”; your eyes look on the Host; your mouth receives It; your emotions (if God gives you to feel devout, for it is a gift, it is not the stuff of holiness or devotion, but it helps) are those of adoring love and joy and sorrow and hope; your mind tries to compass something of what is being done; your will tries to give itself to God’s will: your whole personality is thus for the moment caught up in a single act of love, of contemplation. But such moments must be rare: we are living our earthly lives and so we must eat, drink, sleep, work, play, laugh, cry, suffer, make merry, make friends, make love, make plans, make the best of many a bad job: but all this is meant to be, not an interruption of our moments of worship, but a prolongation and expression of them. So St. Paul tells us that whatever we do we should do to the glory of God: all living is meant to be worship.

We begin a meal by invoking a blessing: it is in order that the meal, *as* a meal, as a human activity, should be holy; and so, as far as possible, it should be *humanly* well done — good, natural food, well cooked, served with a certain dignity (“the sauce to meat is ceremony”) and eaten in good company, with good talk and laughter.

Man's Work Is Worship

People who live close to natural things, working with them or for them or making things out of them — husbandmen, foresters, shepherds, carpenters, sailors — do much more than learn about them: they learn them; and if you learn a thing as opposed to merely learning about it, it is much easier to make your knowledge and your love of it part of your knowledge and love of God. If you want to praise God by painting on canvas you need not paint what is called a “holy picture”; if with words, you need not write or sing a hymn; if with music, it need not be a sacred oratorio: if you are in love with God you can paint a daffodil and it will be a holy picture, you can write a poem about trees or the sea and it will be a hymn. For through Christ our Lord, divine and human, all things are made holy, and can be the material of worship, as in the Mass the bread and wine are the materials out of which the Sacrifice will be made. And if we live the Church's sacramental life fully, that is what it will mean: the hallowing of everything in us, of all that goes to make up our lives.

We each have an individual vocation, to be and do this or that in the world, to make this or that of our lives, and to praise and worship God thereby. But whatever our individual vocations, there is one duty, one basic vocation, that we all have in common: to make the best use we can of the materials within ourselves, the personal gifts, that God has given us. We all know the parable of the talents; we do not always apply its lesson to our own lives. Human beings are never static; they are as constantly in movement as a quicksand; and it is a movement either of growth or of decay: we have to choose. But growth is not just a matter of size or extent: a man does not reach physical perfection by growing and growing in girth and stature, nor does he reach full development of mind

simply by learning more and more facts, or of heart simply by loving more and more individuals. We are concerned with quality as well as quantity, with depth as well as extension.

On Being Alive

To be physiologically alive you have to breathe in and breathe out; to be psychologically alive you have to absorb, assimilate, and then express, create; but you will not in fact create unless you love what you assimilate, unless your knowledge is love-knowledge. The artist sees beauty and falls in love with it; then by some mysterious inner process he both assimilates and transmutes it, makes it his own; and so, finally, he expresses it again, re-creates it, in his own idiom. Sublimely, the same sort of process is to be found in the story of Mary, God's Mother: she first listens, hears, receives; then, treasuring up words and events, she ponders over them in her heart; then, finally, she expresses what she has now fully understood: she makes and gives to her Son in his Passion her own com-passion.

If we human beings are to absorb reality we must, in every sense of the phrase, come to our senses: we shall never do it unless we learn to stop and be still and look and listen, unless we teach ourselves, train ourselves, to use our senses thoughtfully, deeply. And that is true not only of this or that reality but of Reality: we are to come to the *invisibilia Dei* through the visible things that He has created for us to lead us to Him. That is what the Church is all the time trying to teach us: that we must lead a *sacramental* life, everything a "sacred sign" for us if only we have eyes to see and ears to hear. That is why we have to react so strongly against the kind of artificial, urbanized, commercialized existence which so often passes for real living in our modern world, a world of getting where the tempo is so frenzied that we have no time to look and listen and may even forget that we have any need to.

The Church knows that we have need of formulas, texts, catechisms, that we need to learn *about* divine reality, that we need a creed (though even so she teaches us to *sing* our Credo: even the prose of the Church is never prosaic); but she also knows that these formulas are not sufficient, that they will become dried up, dead for us, unless we continually pour into them the new vitality of immediate experience; and so all the time in our worship she

directs our attention to material things, natural things, the sacred signs, water, wood, wine, oil, fire; and through these things (if only, once again, we will stop and be still, look, listen, wonder, ponder) she teaches us to be wise, teaches us the sorrow and joy of living, teaches us what we are and what we are to become, teaches us "what God is like" and how to become like Him. She shows us the divine answer to the question, "Shall these dry bones live?" She shows us the divine life, the divine mercy, coming to us as water to an arid soil, to what is dying of thirst, as fire to what is dying of cold, as bread to the starving, and as the wine that rejoices the heart. If we live, deeply and fully, the Church's liturgy we do not thereby acquire a lot of scientific knowledge *about* water and wood and wine; we learn, we assimilate these things themselves and the other, deeper reality which as symbols they both conceal and reveal: we absorb the Mystery, and therefore live it, and therefore express it in our lives.

The Saint vs. the Stuffed Shirt

To be receptive of God, to be obedient, responsive, to His molding, His transforming activity within us, to become therefore God-filled, able to say in some degree, "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me": that is the essence of Christianity. That is why it was suggested earlier that we might sometimes talk of grace as super-vitality, because its effect is to make us richly, vividly, exuberantly, divinely alive, all aglow with the Spirit. That is the difference between the Saint and the pious stuffed shirt. Whom, in the Gospel, does our Lord commend? The pagan centurion, the woman who was a sinner in the city. To whom does He promise paradise? The thief on the cross. And the heroes of His best-loved parables are the prodigal son and the good Samaritan. It is the Scribes and Pharisees, with their strict fidelity to the Law, whom He denounces. Great faith, great love, humility, sorrow: these are the things that count most: many sins, as He Himself told us, are forgiven those who love much.

But, the implication is clear, the love must be deep. And though it is the love of God that is here primarily in question, the same is true also of the love of man. The Church gives great honor to the relationship, the sacramental union, between husband and wife:

here above all other earthly experience it is a question of a deep and lifelong voyage of discovery, of not just learning about but of learning, of communion at every level of the personality. But though this relationship is unique, still in the Christian view all human relationships should have in them something of the directness and depth, the personal immediacy, the reverence and the vitality, of this. In the Mass we are called a family; and it is as a family that we are to approach the altar, the table: it has been pointed out that the word *communio* does not signify simply a relationship between the individual soul and Christ — that would be *unio* or at any rate *co-unio* — but our common, shared union, as a family, with Christ. Just as one of the supreme glories and consolations of Christian marriage lies in the fact that through it husband and wife go together, hand in hand, to God, so it must be in some degree in every relationship between Christians: we are meant to feel responsible for one another and to be helped by one another. It ought to be unthinkable that a Christian should ever, through the neglect or heedlessness of his fellow Christians, be lonely.

Human Kindness

So we return to the thoughts with which we started. We can never hope to share as we should in divine reality unless we learn to be human. The great mystic Ruysbroeck said very wisely, "Be kind, be kind, and you will be saints": it is as simple, and as arduous, as that. You cannot think of any of the great lovers of God as being other than kind to their fellow men; but the difficulty, without that great love, of being consistently kind, all the time, to everyone, we know all too well from our own experience. We are unkind because we are selfish; and we are selfish because we have never learned love, never learned God. But at least we can make sure that we know what should be our aim and the object of our prayer: that increased vitality, that divine vitality, which will set us aflame.

Let us be quite clear: the purpose of the divine vitality *is* to help us keep the Commandments, *is* to help us to control our senses and emotions, *is* to keep us faithful to our prayer and our church-going, *is* to give us energy and zeal for good works: we never out-

grow the need for these things and we cannot sidetrack them: there is no short cut. The centurion was commended not because he was a pagan but because of the greatness of his faith: if you have enough faith you can, and you will, move mountains, even the mountains of sloth, sensuality, selfishness. The woman was commended not because she had been a sinner but because of the greatness of her love: if you have enough love you will want to do, and you will do, the will of Him you love. "If you love Me, keep My commandments"; our Lord might have added, "If you love Me enough you *will* keep My commandments." It is in that sense that St. Augustine says, *Ama et fac quod vis*: "Love, and then do what you will," because if you love God you will want to do what He wants you to do. It is a question of emphasis; but the emphasis is of supreme importance: it can make all the difference between a saint and a *bien pensant*. You could, if you liked (heaven help you!), see the Christian moral standards simply in terms of what is correct, respectable, proper, and in a cold-bloodedly dutiful way set out to live by them; and no doubt when you died you would — in your modest, mousy way — creep into heaven. But it would be a mousy way because it would have been *your* way, not the specifically Christian way: something *you* had achieved, not something mighty done in you by Him whose name is holy. A mousy way because though you went to heaven there would be little for you to take with you: the little talent of personality still tightly wrapped up in its napkin, never grown, never "become all things," never exploded into flame, never set on fire by the great golden Lion, the Rising Sun whom we adore. A mousy way because totally prosaic, never a breath of the Christian poetry, a flick of the Eagle's wing, a hint of John the Divine, the seer, learning God on the breast of God.

Stouthearted Christian View of Life

It is possible to spend one's life avoiding wrongdoing, and doing the conventionally right things at the right times, but never doing anything creative, never really becoming anything, and so ending up in a sort of vacuum. Far better, certainly, to do that than to spend one's life doing evil and destructive things; but it is not the Christian ideal. We sometimes forget that there is a Christian

virtue which St. Thomas calls *magnanimitas* and which we can translate as greatheartedness; and closely allied to it there is *magnificentia* which, if it primarily means being greathearted about material expenditures, can by extension also mean being greathearted, prodigal, about all forms of self-giving. The pouring out of the precious ointment on Christ's feet was a magnificent gesture: it was also, as Judas was quick to point out, a waste; and in those two contrary aspects of the one gesture you have the two opposing views of life, of the good life — and only one of them is the Christian view. Man does not live by bread alone. Traditionally we define man as an animal endowed with the power of reasoning: that does not mean that he can live by reason alone. Judas' argument was on the face of it reasonable: but there are times when reason is not enough. Reason is prose: we need the poetry as well: we need (not against reason but over and above reason) that Wind that bloweth where it listeth.

"Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house": and if His house is primarily His temple, the Church, it is also yourself (since according to St. Paul you are the temple of God) and *your* house — your home and family, your company of friends, your fatherland, your earth: and they are yours and their beauty is yours to cherish, to feel responsible for them, to learn, to love within your love of God, that in so doing you may become wise, greathearted, magnificent. It is sad and unsatisfactory for a man to become a mouse, even a church mouse, for then so much of the beauty must necessarily pass him by, and that means so much of the *material* of living and loving and serving God. We are only creatures: we cannot, like God, create out of nothing: we need the material, the beauty of the house.

A Place for Pain

But it is not only beauty that would pass by the church mouse — or that we need to be aware of it if we are to be truly creative in the world as it exists — it is tragedy too, the tears and the tragedy that are at the heart of things, though for the Christian they are not the last word. The pagan could only say, *Sunt lacrimae rerum*, the tears are there, in everything; but the Christian adds a cry of triumph: "God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of the saints,

and there shall no more be any mourning or weeping or any sorrow." He *adds* his triumphant cry: he does not shy away from the tragedy or pretend that it is illusion: he holds that it is not the last word only in the sense that it must be met, faced, accepted, lived, and so in the end transcended. And so it is as much a part of the material out of which he creates — in work, in words, in love, in life, in worship — as is the beauty of the house and the glory that is in it. Here we work in *chiaroscuro*, in light and darkness, joy and sorrow: it is only later that we come, if God grants it, to the place where there is no darkness but only light, and no song but that of joy unalloyed.

"He was a burning and a shining light": so our Lord spoke of the Baptist, the precursor, the pre-Christian, the man who went "back to Nature," living in the desert, feeding on locusts and wild honey: the man therefore who in a sense represents the natural law (his baptism was a valuable sign indeed but not a grace-giving sacrament; his advice to those who came to him was concerned with the natural law of justice) but the natural law as preparation for the New Dispensation, the law of love, the wind, the water, the fire.

So we have to pray to be human: to be alive, aware, contemplative, creative; to be just and prudent and brave and self-controlled; to love the beauty of the house, to be reverent in our approach to God's handiwork and especially His human handiwork, to feel both responsibility and compassion for the companion of that handiwork — to be kind. But we have to pray too that all this may spring from an inner fire that is not of our kindling, an inner energy that is not just a human vitality and that drives us on to a greatheartedness which makes human prudence look niggardly, a love which is far more prodigal, and more lovely, than justice, a Christlikeness which means that something much greater than the self has taken control and speaks and acts through mind and heart and senses, so that at least it begins to be true for us to say, "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me."

A professional journalist, Mr. Edward Keegan is a sub-editor on a daily newspaper in Fleet Street, London.

False Humanism

E. J. Keegan

RECENTLY a lady professor on the radio declared to all and sundry that children should not be taught the fairy story of Christianity as it takes such a long time to disabuse them when they become adult.

According to this erudite woman, life is an end in itself and it is ridiculous to assume that it is any sort of pilgrimage to a better afterlife, which cannot be proved anyway. We should all be humanists, said she, and get rid of the quaint idea that there will be pie in the sky when you die. Life is complete in itself and if we want heaven it is right here on earth. All we have to do is to reach out for it. She did not explain how far we have to reach, or in what direction, but the general impression she conveyed was that it was all done by humanitarianism, without the help of God and also presumably without the aid of a net or a balancing pole.

It is all as simple as falling off a log and can be picked up without a teacher. You start off by the assertion that man is a product of natural forces. He is just one of the animal kingdom like the monkey, but it happens that somehow he has attained to a higher stage of evolution than his relative. But like cousin monkey he belongs entirely to this earth. His interests, ideals, and necessities are the products of his natural development and therefore can be satisfied within the confines of this world. He does not have to travel to eternity for happiness, or to satisfy any craving for something more than this life can give, or is capable of giving. All he has to do is to concentrate his endeavors on working for the improvement of the present life. To crave for anything more is just ignorance or ineptitude and no enlightened man would display himself in such an unworthy manner.

The good lady has the philosophy all worked out to seven places of decimals. It is simplicity itself. You are born, you live, and you die. There are no intangibles. The visible, tangible world of experience is the only thing that matters. It is the only reality, and your sojourn on this earth is the sum total of your being. When death comes you are written off and the ledger is closed. What you have accomplished or failed to accomplish in life does not matter. Whether you have been successful or a failure, whether you have suffered or enjoyed your existence, or whether you have developed all the potentialities of your nature do not count. You have been extinguished like a candle and that's that.

It all has a very familiar ring. The same thing was said in the nineteenth century when the Modernists suddenly discovered that God did not exist. Science had put an end to that myth and the poor benighted people would no longer be deceived by the fairy story of Christianity. From then on there would be a glorious freedom for everybody, untrammelled by the shackles of dogma, freed from the chains of clericalism, and able to march forward, head high, chest out, four square to annihilation! Karl Marx knocked us right over the ropes when he said that religion is the opium of the people. Or did he? Karl is long since dead but religion is still very much alive.

The go-ahead people were proud to call themselves atheists but eventually it became somewhat *demode* as a term. Humanism sounded much better and scientific humanism better still. And what could be more attractive than the extension of the term to humanitarianism? There is a glow about that word. It connotes a fellow feeling for all men. Hand in hand, help one another, shoulder to shoulder, make common cause, a sacred confederation, *esprit de corps*, hang together or you will all hang separately, be all things to all men — but, kick God out!

Humanism is unnatural. Only God can adequately satisfy the object of man's desire. Without God he is always more or less discontented. He may temporarily persuade himself that wealth, power, or mundane success are the be-all and end-all of happiness but he can only do this by a lowering of his ideals, or by overestimating the worth of finite good. The more he assures himself that he is content with this world the less human he becomes, for

he thereby droops from the full stature of his manhood. Just as Alexander the Great sighed when he had no more worlds to conquer, so does the humanist lack the completion of his desires when he rejects the only system that can provide him with the goal of his ambition.

Every man desires complete justice. It is a deeply seated instinct which has been given us by God who is Justice. This desire distinguishes us from the animals who have no concern with it. The law of the jungle excludes justice. But in a humanist or secular world there can never be complete justice, for justice is replaced by expediency. On every side we see instances which make us burn with indignation. Behind the iron and bamboo curtains, for example, there are thousands of our coreligionists suffering for the right to live their own lives in their own way. Many of them have died and many more will die without justice being satisfied. According to the humanist they are just unlucky. If they happen to die under injustice, well, it cannot be helped and nothing can be done about it, once they have gone to death.

The ordinary affairs of life teem with injustice. There are employers who oppress their workers with long hours and small wages; employees who rob their masters by wasting their time and property; people who ill-treat children or animals; husbands who are cruel to their wives; worthy and efficient people who are superseded by dumb clucks who happen to belong to the right lodge. These instances can be multiplied. They are subversions of the order of justice and cry out for restitution. They are deviations from the pattern of the correct behavior of one man to another and everybody, humanist or otherwise, recognizes them as harmful and deleterious to society at large. The humanist has to confess his inability to do anything about it, whereas the Christian has the knowledge that ultimately justice will be vindicated. A man who has defrauded another and by reason of the fraud lives on the fat of the land while his victim dies in poverty, does not get away with it for eternity. If he did, there would be no point in life at all. He has ultimately to face a just God who will demand retribution. It may be a long time for an aggrieved victim to wait and he may suffer untold misery in the waiting, but always in his mind there

is hope in God. Humanism which denies that hope is thereby inhuman.

And what of love? God who is Love has given us an infinite capacity for love. Without this we would not be able to worship Him, to dedicate ourselves to any particular service, or to give any service to anybody, or anything. To attempt to find complete satisfaction in any finite thing is useless because nothing finite can ever measure up to our capacity for love. You cannot give unconditional devotion to that which is imperfect or limited. God alone can satisfy our desires, for He is the Absolute of Love. Cast Him aside and we are doomed to frustration. Even our love for wife, family, and friends is not ample enough to satisfy our urge for the infinite love of God. Love of country, or unselfish dedication to a beneficent cause, is insufficient to satiate the thirst for the infinite.

The humanist, no less than anybody else, has the same infinite desires even though he denies them. He tries to fit a quart into a pint pot. He is living in a world too small for him. He is trying to force his nature into a finite space, whereas it is designed for infinity. In endeavoring to assuage his hunger for love he descends to mere creatures and things. This lowering of his ideals and the inadequacy of his creature gods makes him selfish and precipitates him more and more into personal gratification. Self-deification dominates him and that is a short step to demoralization and depravity. The urge for love turns to hate and there is no more malevolent emotion.

All this is a necessary corollary to the denial of immortality. Man was created to be eternal and he will never be satisfied with less than that. He may make a success in life and have the world at his feet. But however much he may be esteemed by men, to whatever heights of success he may ascend he can never reach the point of assurance that there is no further happiness remaining for him. He can never really convince himself that his life is complete and existence after death a chimera. To say, as the humanist does, that death closes the door on life is to admit the frustration of everything he has achieved or hoped to achieve. It is an admission that his life has been a dead loss. In this connection it is somewhat humorous, although tragic, to see atheists having a memorial serv-

ice over the ashes of a departed friend and delivering a panegyric. A Christian burial service makes sense for there is the conviction of life beyond the grave, but there can be no rhyme or reason in homage to the ashes of annihilation. Whereas the humanist claims that death is the closure of the door, the Christian knows that death is the opening of the door to a more glorious existence.

Communism, with its doctrine of the brotherhood of man, is an example of the inhumanity of humanism, because it exalts the community at the expense of the individual. Communists apparently believe in the immortality of the brotherhood but not in the immortality of the brothers. The poor brethren are merely a means to an end. In the name of humanitarianism they can be kicked around and have to like it. From the Communist point of view this is perfectly logical for as no man is worth a Dneiper Dam or a Five-Year Plan and is due for annihilation anyway, why bother to have any respect for his feelings or any consideration for his personal rights?

So, with all due respect to the lady professor, we would rather have the "fairy story" of Christianity. At least we can hope for a happy ending and we can follow the story right through to *finis* without coming to a dead end owing to the last pages being destroyed.

CHRISTIAN HUMANISTS

In the researches you make and the reforms you propose, you alone will be the best humanists, for you alone have it in you to provide the emerging civilization with a standard which will be complete, namely, the right conception of man. It is the Christian conception of human nature, and it alone, which will save man from being dehumanized.

Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard

The Pope Is Dead

A Personal Testimony

Robert Ostermann

AS I waited for my train it had started to rain again, first a spray like wet dust thrown in the eyes and then large warm drops bursting against one's raincoat like bombs. The trees around the station, their changing leaves glistening in the wet as if lacquered, had already developed an autumnal droop. With every minute, visibility decreased; now you could not see beyond the blunt signal towers standing a short distance down the line.

Most of the commuters were sheltered in the station. The rails began to hum and rattle with the train approaching. This was the signal. They hurried through the door in a thick column which broke when the leaders reached the tracks, scattering up and down the platform like a river flooding across the face of a dam.

The doors slid back; we entered; I had to steady myself against the jar of resuming motion. The engine's bell, its regular tolling muffled in the heavy atmosphere, had a funeral sound. I thought it was fitting, indeed I felt the whole of nature should collaborate in mourning, for of course only nine and one-half hours earlier Rome had flashed the news to the world. His Holiness Pope Pius XII had died.

The brilliant foliage raced past the window. Never had the beauty of autumn seemed so sad, so precarious, as if the crimson and yellow patches were blazing fires rapidly burning themselves to extinction.

Within myself I was aware of being as depressed and sodden as the drowned landscape beyond the glass. Across the aisle a woman raised her morning tabloid. From its front page, filling it, the Pope's austere and piercing features gazed over at me.

All at once I felt an overpowering sense of desolation which,

after it had passed, left me limp. I could not account for it, and no amount of mentally reviewing Pius XII's prodigious career and leadership of the Church gave me any help. None of his brilliant initiatives (I know them well and stand in awe of their greatness) in renewing the life of the Church militant in our time and fitting her for the future could explain my feeling of personal loss. One might regret the death of a genius in so many fields and interests as a disaster to mankind. But would the lament touch the depths of this sense I had of having been abandoned?

I leafed indifferently through my own paper, and a photo on an inside page reminded me of a newsreel I had once seen. The Pope was receiving in audience several hundred Italian grammar school children. They approached him in a single line. A lot of fussy ladies in severe black kept darting in and out, jabbing at points here and there in the line as if taking tucks in it to keep it from falling to pieces.

Each little girl bore a small bouquet of white blossoms which she presented to the Pope. They came shyly up, eyes lowered, curtsied, and handed him their gift. He stretched out his hands, taking every spray with great gentleness, and upon each child he lavished that rare radiant smile he apparently reserved only for the very young.

Finally the presentation was completed, and for a moment no one appeared to know what to do. The mothers were motionless. The Pope had risen to his feet. What followed, occurred quite spontaneously. A number of the little girls joined hands to form a ring around His Holiness and they proceeded to dance in a circle with him at the center. Round and round they went, skipping lightly, their hands swinging, and for just an instant (a careless observer would have missed it) the solemn, erect, white figure of the Pope seemed to move with the same light effervescent rhythm.

Now I realize what I have lost. The father has died. And his children in their sorrow must weep.

THE GAME

We did not know that we were ludicrous
when the unholy vow was whispered in the season
bursting budlike, opening, the seeds'
life round our waste there.

All about was fission:
separation, individual
floral growth spread out profusely.

Caution
urged: Be safe; love, yes, but be safe.
Hidden by darkness, each locked in his passion,
nightly we lay, nor knew that we denied
self abundance.

Did you too, unheeding
silence's warning, turn the drum toward earth
while pulses pounded doom at the murderers' wedding?

— Joseph Joel Keith

BOOK REVIEWS

TWO LAUGHTERS, a *Book Club for Poetry* selection, by Joseph Joel Keith, The Golden Quill Press, Frankestown, New Hampshire, 79 pp., \$2.50

Both spirit and spirituality are at the core of these fifty-five poems. Any treatment of human experience if it is to have value must be boned with the artist's sympathetic feeling for his subject — that is what I mean by the spirit in these poems; and the weighing of man's experience *sub specie aeternitatis*, however subtly that may be done, is my understanding of their spirituality.

In "Dark Time," the man speaking discovers the beginning day not by the sound of the clock but by the clicking heels of a woman as she passes his house on her way to and from church. "Returning heels announce my time/ to breakfast. Doubt looks from my mirror,/ I who am fed; and fed, still hunger,/ seeing my sister coming nearer." This is honest and moving as an individual's experience. Whereas "Sunday Edition" is a painful commentary on larger man's attitude to "Remember thou keep holy the Lord's day." In the Sunday newspaper and in man's Sunday life, "Love has no value. Lust is featured,/ especially in the costly Sabbath sections,/ along with market gains and Senator McNulty,/ and various resurrections." For his Amen, the poet laments, "alas, such is the fashion."

Although it is difficult for the reader to forget the man's burning dislike for his dead grandmother, in "Sound of Bone," by the same token it is easy to remember the devoted love of this man, placing lilacs on his mother's grave. Another disturbing poem is "Boy on Limb"; one does not readily abandon from memory this particular energetic adolescent: for here is a delicate portrayal of the young male, alive to his own sensory responses, experiencing now "new hungers that he dared not feed." Esthetically rewarding, too, are the seven poems comprising the group entitled "Hawley"; this is the ideal countryside where the people are real and earnest — and *charitable* (though the poet never "preaches" that directly, as St. Paul, for instance, might have done had he dealt with these "kindly folk").

Compassion rather than revulsion is the feeling behind "Deserted Lover," a tightly written lyric presenting a woman who has failed in love: "Hers are the eyes of night,/ eyes that are veiled, set deep,/ as if

they long to hide,/ or to forever sleep." (That split infinitive is perfect.) A different kind of compassion can be found in "The Scholar" where another figure of the night passes before us: he is an old man who searches relentlessly for knowledge beyond our stars and grows satisfied in the realization that he begins to approach the mystery of heaven itself.

"Not Here, But There" is perhaps a summary of Mr. Keith's critique on twentieth-century civilization. In the final stanza of the homily there is the sharply contrasting light and darkness that we witness in so many of these poems; the contrast, though, works into a paradox of irony:

Not here: if the godless playing god, the small,
the hollow, sanctimonious, and vain,
touch you with their dust, run to your cave:
live there in darkness; find your light again.

Joseph Joel Keith is a poet already loved by Americans and by those of other countries where his works are widely published. A Book Club for Poetry selection, his *Two Laughters* deserves the attention of all those interested in an art that calls out to the deepest in man. This voice offers the "something rich and strange" of Shakespeare.

Raymond Roseliep
Dubuque, Iowa

THE POPE SPEAKS: The Teachings of Pope Pius XII, edited, with the assistance of the Vatican Archives, by Michael Chinigo, Pantheon, N. Y., 378 pp., \$4.50

The body of Eugenio Pacelli, Pope Pius XII, has been laid to rest near the bones of St. Peter, but in his writings we still possess his soul. And what a soul! To say that he was a universal genius is an understatement, for his genius was fired to white heat and light by a single ruling passion: the Spirit of Love.

While priests, teachers, and writers searched their archives and conned their libraries for a modern synthesis of Catholic thought and action, God gave us a Pope to write encyclicals on:

1. The Condition of the Modern State (*Summi Pontificatus*);
2. The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ (*Mystici Corporis*);
3. Biblical Studies (*Divino Afflante Spiritu*);
4. The Sacred Liturgy and the Liturgical Life (*Mediator Dei*);
5. The Sanctity Necessary for the Modern Priest (*Menti Nostrae*);

6. A Sanely Modern Theology (*Humani Generis*);
7. The Catholic Missions (*Evangelii Praecones*);
8. Religious Sisters (*Sacra Virginitas*);
9. The Reunion of the Eastern Churches (*Orientales omnes Ecclesias and Orientales Ecclesias*);
10. Catholics of the United States of America (*Sertum Laetitiae*);
11. The Blessed Virgin (esp. *Fulgens Corona*).

The list could easily be expanded, but, whatever its final catalogue, we must all recognize the fact that when the Pope spoke, his was the living voice of the teaching Church, ringing clear and true with the accents of perennial wisdom and tender, pastoral care. And by word and work, he has bequeathed to us that *modern Catholic synthesis* which Cardinal Suhard saluted from afar.

Pantheon Books, Inc., has done the English-speaking world, and Catholics in particular, the signal service of compiling an authentic summary of the most important of his writings and pronouncements. Of necessity, the topics are rather unco-ordinated and incomplete; a shade of emphasis has to wait upon the death of the man and his ultimate appraisal by God and the Church. Yet certain conclusions can already be drawn for future compilers and students of the mind of our late Holy Father:

THE ITALIAN: His natural gifts and Italian temper remind me of a passage in Henry Morton Robinson's *The Cardinal*: Gaetano Orselli, the Italian ship captain is analyzing the Italian mentality:

L'uomo unico. Man the artist, the city-maker, the poet, the fame-hungerer — man the paradise-stormer and celebrator of this world's beauty. The mold was made in Italy . . . nowhere was man ever so flowering, so complete, so universal, yet so individualized as in (Renaissance) Italy.

Certainly, Eugenio Pacelli was that: the Christian humanist, the unique and cultured gentleman.

THE CATHOLIC PRIEST: Father Fermoye seems to be speaking of Monsignor Pacelli in the same work when he muses:

The axle of the cosmos seemed to pass through his [the Monsignor's] mind. Knowledge of this world, political insight, and social vision were matched only by his attachment to the Church. Part diplomat, part teacher, and all priest, this remarkable man. . . .

Though he never had a parish of his own, the whole world was his because of his Catholic priesthood, and because of his peculiar work in that priesthood: the Vatican diplomacy.

THE POPE: To His Holiness, the Church was always the *pia mater Ecclesia*. He acknowledged his debt to her in his last will and testament, while bequeathing to her his writings. Yet he became a *new kind of Pope*; while "preserving all," he believed in being "sanely modern." If Leo XIII sketched the policies which would govern the Church in the modern world; if Pope St. Pius X gave her the internal organization and sacramental impulse that were to make her vigorous, patient, and victorious in wars and persecutions; if Pius XI fought those wars and persecutions with all the tenacity of a mountain climber to bring about "the peace of Christ in the reign of Christ" — then it was left to Pope Pius XII uniquely to use Leo's policies, nourished by the unfolding liturgical reform begun by the tenth Pius, to complete the conquest of modern nationalism by imprinting that unique character of *The Supranational Society of Glorious Love* which Holy Church bears today: love for the warring world and for Christ's Church; love for the liturgy and her priesthood; love for Scripture and sacred theology; love for the arts and sciences; love for Christ Jesus, whose vicar he was, and for Mary, the Mother of the Whole Christ — compounded into a beautiful life of prayer, abstinence, and crucifying, unremitting solicitude and labor: this divinely human love was what made that unique man, that saintly priest Eugenio Pacelli, Pope Pius XII — the greatest, saintliest, wisest, most modern Pope in history.

Perhaps a future edition of *The Pope Speaks* might give a word picture of His Holiness in an introduction. But other works on the Pope's writings have become a current need.

We need his writings to read, assimilate, enjoy, and model our lives. We need a volume of his major encyclicals. We need a digest of his major pronouncements. Each man, woman, and child needs a *vade mecum* on that phase of modern life in which he is called to imitate Christ; and Pius XII's complete works, numbering nearly thirty volumes, will provide us with all these sources. Caution should be used with the translations; frequently the Latin of those addresses delivered originally in the vernacular is obscure and stilted. Mr. Chinigo has done admirably in this regard.

Now may God inspire the publisher who will undertake the completion of Pantheon's fine beginning, this summary of *The Pope Speaks*; for the ancient words have come true once again, "Peter — or rather, Christ Himself — spoke through Pius XII."

Father Denis, O.C.D., Holy Hill, Wis.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST, by Gerald Vann, O.P.,
and P. K. Meagher, O.P., Sheed and Ward, New York,
N. Y., 126 pp.

The ever present danger of diabolical temptation and manipulation of the world and the flesh in his conflict with God and God's favorite creatures, men and women, are handled popularly in eight chapters of modern Thomism by Fathers Vann (*The Divine Pity* and *The High Green Hill*) and Meagher ("The Spirit of Religious Obedience in Modern America," in *Men's Religious Community Life in the United States*).

There is a sane modernity about the book that makes it well worth reading and pondering. The central source of the cancer of modern paganism is indicated by the titles of three of the most significant chapters: "The Perils of the Pinnacle," "Presumption and Vainglory," and "Pride or Freedom." Father Meagher's analysis of competition in our society is especially pertinent to young (and old) executives: "The individual learns to see that *in order to be secure* and to make his way successfully it is necessary to match himself against other individuals, to surpass them in excellence and accomplishment or in prestige, to dominate and control them, and possibly to bring about their defeat as real or, at least, as potential threats to his own security or advantage. And his habit of looking upon others in this way, together with the hostile tension it implies, has an unfortunate tendency to pervade and color all his human relationships" (p. 116, *italics mine*). Behold the Organization Man!

As with all illusions, this modern illusion of the omnipotence of competition leaves a trail of moral and mental wrecks in its train; but certainly it is one of the devil's modern masterpieces, from which neither church nor cloister is immune. This reviewer looked in vain for specific remedies in addition to traditional Thomism, prayer and fasting. However, it did me the service of driving me back to the *Etudes Carmelitaines'* "Satan," in which the ancient wiles of diabolism are quite effectively unmasked; now who will do us the service of a diagnostic of the modern malaise of competition, the all-conquering, all-justifying weapon of our *Homo Corporativus*? He might end by proving that a new type of slavery has been introduced, since the alternative is not "Freedom or Humility," but "Pride or Freedom."

Father Denis, O.C.D.

THE ESSENCE OF THE BIBLE, by Paul Claudel, translated from the French *J'Aime la Bible* by Wade Baskin, Philosophical Library, Inc., New York, 1957, 120 pp., \$3.00

When Paul Claudel died early in 1955, honor was heaped upon the eighty-six-year-old French diplomat, poet, and playwright who had served his country with such distinction in Europe, America, and the Far East, and who has given the world richly religious and deeply symbolic plays which are popular as well as critical successes today. The story of his conversion in Notre Dame on Christmas day, 1886, has been often told. Less well known is the rediscovery of the Bible that he made that same evening. In *The Essence of the Bible*, he describes this experience:

On my table was a Bible, the gift of a Protestant friend to my sister Camille. I opened it, something that I had never done before, and opened it at two different places. The first was the part about Emmaus in St. Luke where the Lord, against the background of the oncoming night, revealed the secrets of the Old Testament to the burning hearts of His two companions. And the second was the sublime Chapter 8 of the Book of Proverbs, which is used as an Epistle at the Mass of the Immaculate Conception. Ah! I was quick to recognize the features of the Mother of God in the radiant figure which this passage evokes; I was quick to recognize the features of the Mother of God along with the inseparable features of the Church and divine Wisdom. Every female character in my later plays bore the imprint of this fascination.

Forty busy years followed before he was to reap the full fruit of this discovery.

Then I realized that the Holy Scriptures are more than a vehicle, that they alone form a sublime edifice suited not only to worship but to residence, and that the whole world was made for the sole purpose of serving them as support and embellishment.

During the last sixteen years of his life Claudel made this "sublime edifice" his home, as his many books on biblical subjects attest. Few of these books have been translated into English, so many readers attracted by Claudel's fame will turn to this posthumous work for enlightenment. They will find in its pages little to reward them.

Scholars cannot fail to pass a severe judgment in Claudel's handling of inspired texts in these pages. When he writes as a Christian and a poet there is beauty in what he says, light-bringing joy in his commentary. Yet this commentary (considered exegetically) is without unity or method. In it there is more imagination than interpretation. His

richly personal tone for the Bible is evident in every page but we search in vain for a respect for the traditions of the Fathers, the influence of the liturgy, a regard for the norms of interpretation recommended in recent papal pronouncements.

The seven vaguely related chapters vary in value. "My First Love: the Bible" is autobiographical. It tells of his childhood devotion to the text and the fascination "the vast poem of the Bible" held for him during the last years of his life. In the other chapters, there are analyses of various scriptural words and phrases, part of an acrimonious controversy in "The Meaning of the Holy Scriptures," a Marian year address, etc.

The translation is uneven. There is no imprimatur.

Mother Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J.,
Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, Purchase, N. Y.

MY LAST BOOK, by James M. Gillis, C.S.P., P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 246 pp., \$3.95

The Paulist Fathers commemorated one hundred years of prolific labor for American Catholicism in 1958. Father James Gillis, C.S.P., died on March 14, 1957, after a career of 56 years as a priest and apostle in America. His last few months of sickness did not keep him from writing another book for the centennial year — his last: a collection of short informal meditations. Father McSorley, C.S.P., the editor, remarks in the beginning that this "developed into a sort of spiritual autobiography. . . . It was as if the same truths which had been persistently emphasized in a lifelong apostolate during which he was teaching men how to live, had to be no less emphasized in this brief period during which he was attempting to teach men how to die."

This book is excellent reflective reading. It is practical and clearly written. It touches many different ideas: "The State of the World," "The Value of a Soul," "The Personality of Jesus." Father Gillis does not show the slightest trace of senility. Instead he has a wise and dynamic concern for his society.

In general, Father Gillis points to the inadequacies of humanity in relation to its many dignities. He explores the expanse of his wide reading in literature. He interprets the words of Augustine, à Kempis, Chesterton, and Newman. He applies them constructively to the needs of our day, in the expectation of quickly restoring it in Jesus Christ.

Frater Edmund, O.C.D., Washington, D. C.

OUR LIFE OF GRACE, by F. Cuttaz, translated by Angeline Bouchard, Fides, 327 pp., \$6.95

St. Thomas Aquinas says that knowledge precedes love. And a moment's reflection tells us that we can't love a thing until we know something about it. *Our Life of Grace* was written so that more people might come to know better, and therefore love deeper, sanctifying grace.

What is sanctifying grace? Any Catholic third grader can tell you, straight from the Catechism, that sanctifying grace is the supernatural life of the soul, which makes us sons of God, brothers of Christ, temples of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of heaven. So far so good. But what are the consequences of being a member of God's family? Is the presence of the Holy Ghost in the just man an actual fact? And how does one go about increasing eternal life in himself and in others? These are just a few of the questions answered by Canon Cuttaz. If Catholics don't live supernatural lives of holiness, it's not because God has not furnished them with the ability to do so. He can't make a man to be Himself. But He can make a man a sharer in His divine life. And this divine life which we share is none other than sanctifying grace. Canon Cuttaz has done his best to show the transforming effects of this God-life, and how we can co-operate with it to transform our own lives.

Seminarians will find this work a helpful companion volume for their study of the tract *De Gratia*, so clearly and completely does the author expound the effects of sanctifying grace. At the ends of chapters they will find notes on the controverted questions that still agitate theologians. But the book is primarily meant for the inspiration of the faithful, as the author avows in the Foreword, and if he instructs our hearts, it is in order to enkindle in them love for God. Religious and layfolk who are striving for union with God cannot afford to miss reading a work which delineates the very basis of union with God.

A word of credit is due to the translator. Accuracy and theological precision have not compelled her to an abstract or stilted rendering of the original French. Doctrinal and inspirational, the book is nevertheless very readable.

Father Ignatius, O.C.D., Brookline, Mass.

YOU, by Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O., The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis., 1957, 313 pp., \$4.50

This book has already proved its worth by appearing for several months in the top or second position on *Sign's* list of spiritual best

sellers. It deserves the place, although — as so often happens with good books — one cannot help wishing it were even better.

Father Raymond's intention was, no doubt, to write a popular book, a solid theological parallel to the *Power of Positive Thinking* type of book which tries to counteract pessimism and insecurity. Indeed, he discusses Dr. Peale's book, as well as Harry Emerson Fosdick's *On Being a Real Person*, as superficial efforts toward the same end as his own. He begins by asking: "Who are YOU?" and successive chapter titles suggest some of his answers: "One Almighty God Actually Needs," "One Who Can Be as Free as God," "One Who Knows the Only Answer," "One Who Is Truly Someone and Can Do Something." In developing these answers, Father Raymond employs dogma and philosophical theory with the skill of a practiced popularizer. The popularization, however, is never cheap, and avoids the jarringly frivolous tone which too many Catholic authors of such books think necessary. Father Raymond's theme is "Know thy dignity," and he treats his reader with the reverence due such a being as he describes.

Showing an acquaintance with contemporary problems which proves a Trappist need not be intellectually cut off from his world, Father Raymond bases his discussion, as might be expected, on the assumption that the "Incarnation is the only thing that can explain you to yourself." He quotes liberally and aptly from the New Testament and the modern papal encyclicals, as well as from such authors as Bloy, Chesterton, Frank Sheed, and Bishop Sheen.

One of the most unusual chapters is that entitled "One Who Can Be as Free as God," in which Father Raymond analyzes St. Bernard's distinction between the image of God and the likeness of God, and succeeds not only in being clear, but in using the distinction for a practical spiritual purpose. "You were born contemplatives," he reminds the reader. "But the trouble is you too often contemplate the wrong things and the wrong persons. . . . Your one work in life is to . . . contemplate Him whose image you are and whose likeness you can become."

He quotes Bloy as saying: "It seems that in our times truth is too strong for souls, and that they are able to feed only on diminished truths." But this limitation the author of *You* refuses to accept. The truths he presents are not diminished. What is impressive about the book is its scope, and the fearlessness with which Father Raymond puts before his presumably general audience the highest spiritual ideals and the most specific details of dogma. The criticism, which I have heard, that he concentrates on the *individual* (as the title suggests) is without

foundation, for "You" are valuable, Father Raymond rightly insists, as a member of Christ's Mystical Body, which he discusses at length. Those sections of the book which concern the Mass explain what part the liturgy plays in reminding man constantly that he is no mere individual.

The only objection to the book is that its style will unhappily irritate many who need and might profit by what Father Raymond has to say. Pulpit rhetoric is rarely effective in print, and the brand here employed is almost exaggeratedly unctuous, leaning heavily on lush alliteration, cliché metaphors and examples, repeated rhetorical questions, quotation marks to replace voice emphasis, and constant exclamation points. Even the persistent second-person approach which carries out the title becomes acutely embarrassing before the book is well started. All this distracts from the book's excellent doctrine, and will repel many readers who perhaps need it badly. My advice to such readers is: Hold on. The book is worth it.

C. E. Maguire, Newton College, Newton 59, Mass.

THE HERMIT OF CAT ISLAND: the life of Fra Jerome Hawes, by Peter F. Anson, P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York, 1957, 286 pp., illus., appendix, index, \$4.75

Fra Jerome is one of the rare Catholics in modern times who have embraced a hermit's vocation. He began life sedately enough as John Cyril Hawes, grew up in Victorian London to become a brilliant architect, then, restless for God, entered the Anglican ministry serving in the slums. Through a series of strange adventures, he entered the Church at Graymoor in New York, and eventually was ordained in Rome. As Monsignor Hawes he designed churches all over Australia. Finally as a Franciscan tertiary priest, he died, known as the Hermit of Cat Island in the Bahamas, in a chosen poverty and solitude. And in the telling of all this, Peter Anson has reconstructed a spiritual odyssey that is never out of the sound of wind and tropical waters, set in blazing sunshine among natives lovable and quarrelsome as children.

Undoubtedly much of the author's vitality is due to the documents, letters, and diaries of Fra Jerome which he possessed, since the biography was requested by Fra Jerome's bishop. The hermit's pen and ink caricatures of himself in ridiculous situations are wisely included and lend that human appeal established by laughter, while the photographs

of his beautiful white island churches arouse the sense of wonder that is tribute to genius.

In July, 1950, *Colliers' Magazine* published an interview with Fra Jerome by one Bill Davidson, complete with photographs. Fra Jerome professed to be horrified by the published article and Anson chooses to re-emphasize his reaction. This reviewer therefore read the *Colliers'* article and then reread Fra Jerome's comments, and came to the conclusion that Fra Jerome was modestly surprised to see a true reflection of his spiritual stature and was not protesting overmuch. The *Colliers'* article seems to be an accurate and successful effort to depict not only a modern hermit but that philosophy of life which underlies this little-understood vocation, and perhaps might well be read as an introduction to Mr. Anson's book.

Fra Jerome died in June, 1956. According to his wishes, his body was laid, in Franciscan habit, in the rock crypt beneath his hermitage chapel without coffin or flowers, yet another of that long line of Mr. Strachey's "eminent Victorians" who have left unique and enduring footprints on the sands of our time.

Mr. Anson has given us a popular, uncritical biography, delightfully written, of contemporary value for school and college libraries and for all devotees of good travel and biography, as well as for readers in search of wellsprings of the spirit in an increasingly chaotic world.

Mary Kiely, Providence, R. I.

THE LAND OF STONES AND SAINTS, by Frances Parkinson Keyes, Doubleday, New York, 1957, 383 pp., \$4.95

The reviewer of this book is presented with the immediate problem of attempting to classify it as to literary genre. Is it history? or fiction? or a combination of both?

Mrs. Keyes presents the stories (and that word is used advisedly) of five sixteenth-century Spaniards who have some connection with the city of Ávila — hence the title, *The Land of Stones and Saints*, which is an ancient poetic name for that city. To each one of the characters — Queen Isabel, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, Venerable Maria Vela, St. Peter Baptist — she donates about 60 tightly printed pages. So much for the general format of the book. But what about its genre?

It is not straight history, and a few pages suffice to convince the reader of that. For example, the chapter on Venerable Maria Vela

begins: "She had very beautiful hands — smooth, slim, and translucently white, except for the tapering tips and the small oval nails, which were delicately rosy." This is not the language, or the mentality, of an historian. Nor is it fiction — or even historical fiction — for the author does not attempt to create dialogue or fashion a story against the background of historical events, or even dramatize the lives of historical figures.

The author's stated purpose, however, is to present the lives of these five characters. And this reviewer wishes he could say that she has combined the craft of the novelist with the research of the historian to produce a biography of rare technical skill. However, she has done less than this; she has produced a highly interpretative story of the five characters, a story which, at the best, could only be called an appreciation. In other words, instead of biography, we have here a personal interpretation which is not in the least an objective repertorial study.

Had Mrs. Keyes chosen either biography or fiction as the medium for her work — or had she more clearly defined her initial viewpoint — the reader would be less confused in picking up this rather fat volume.

Furthermore, the author has made some glaring historical errors in the text; and she has interpreted some of the historical events — particularly in the chapter on St. John of the Cross — in a manner open to criticism from more competent students of the sixteenth century. Finally, the work is prolix and tends to get stalled in minute points of minimal interest.

All of this on the debit side. But has the book a credit side? It most certainly has, and to the extent that — despite the above serious reservations — the book is recommended to the reader interested in biography or in sixteenth-century Spain. Mrs. Keyes is one of our most successful modern novelists and she brings her skill to the production of a readable book. She has captured the sixteenth-century in print, making it real and believable for the reader. She re-creates a hitherto practically unknown character — St. Peter Baptist — and writes charmingly, although not always accurately, of some other well-known sixteenth-century figures.

And while the author is — in this particular book — neither historian nor novelist, she does present a rich and vivid portrait of the sixteenth-century and a highly readable interpretation of some interesting people.

Father Peter Thomas, O.C.D., Washington, D. C.

BERNADETTE, by Marcelle Auclair, Desclee Co., Inc., New York, 1958, 288 pp., 80 ill., \$3.50

"What is most simply written will be best . . ." wrote Bernadette, and Marcelle Auclair has, most admirably, followed her advice in creating the official biography for the *Comité International du Centenaire des Apparitions de Lourdes*. Today, perhaps, Bernadette confronts modern eyes, suspicious of effortless goodness, as an enigma of unquestioning piety and submission; even to the sophisticated of her day the quality of her extraordinary integrity was difficult to accept. Who has known a person of such ingenuous faith, of such touching sweetness, of such inviolate purity? Marcelle Auclair, writing in her well-defined French style, makes Bernadette very real, though no less remarkable, and it does not seem so surprising that Mary revealed herself in her maternal glory to this fourteen-year-old child who mirrored so many of Mary's virtues.

Miss Auclair has told the whole story of the "Lady" and Bernadette Soubirous, from the first apparition, through the ordeal of her fearful parents, the skeptical authorities, her convent life, to the Ave Maria of her final moment, and, finally, to the Lourdes of 1958 where millions call to the "Lady" for succor.

Bernadette is a striking and immediate testimony to the progress of hagiography; a document of impressive authenticity and honesty. The author's affection for the little shepherdess invests the story's telling with a warmth which robs it of none of its truth; however, a certain lack of contrast makes *Bernadette*, as refreshing as it is, better reading at several sittings. Eighty illustrations concretize the people and places of Lourdes.

Donna Jean Ritter, Pontiac, Mich.

ARCHIVUM BIBLIOGRAPHICUM CARMELITANUM, a supplement to the periodical *Ephemerides Carmeliticae*, published by the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, Piazza San Pancrazio 5a, Rome, Italy, printed by A. Nardini in Rome, Vol. I (1956) and Vol. II (1957), \$2.00 per volume.

Since the end of World War II there has been a phenomenal growth in spiritual literature. Plagued by uncertainty and a spirit of restlessness,

people have begun to realize the deeper values of human existence which are found in the life of the spirit. Many writers have attempted to aid us in the quest for peace and fulfillment. Some, as Caryll Houselander, have written as independent authors. Others have written as members of a distinct school of spirituality, as Thomas Merton for the Cistercians, or Father Marie-Eugene for the Carmelites. The schools of spirituality, in particular, have delved into their spiritual patrimonies for several reasons, among which we may indicate a better formation for future members of the Orders and Societies represented by these schools and also to present their mode of spirituality as adaptable to the lives of the laity. The Discalced Carmelites, especially in Europe, but also in North and South America, have made a great contribution to modern spirituality through their books and magazines. They are indeed fortunate, for they draw from the richest spiritual patrimony in the Church, contained principally in the writings of Saint Teresa of Jesus and Saint John of the Cross. A bibliography, or listing of these modern works under determined headings, seems an indispensable key for anyone interested in the modern developments of the Teresian Carmelite spirituality.

Father Benno of Saint Joseph, O.C.D., saw the need of such a bibliography and published it, beginning with the year 1946, in the *Ephemerides Carmeliticae*, a publication of the faculty of the International College of the Order in Rome. Because of serious illness Father Benno was forced to cease this praiseworthy labor. In 1955 the present librarian of the International College, Father Simeon of the Holy Family, O.C.D., was prevailed upon by his confreres to continue Father Benno's work. Thus, in 1956, appeared, as a supplement to the regular issue of the *Ephemerides Carmeliticae*, the first volume of bibliography covering the previous year, and, in 1957, the second volume giving a listing of the year 1956.

The increasing amount of Carmelite studies necessitates certain limitations to the bibliography. It has, therefore, been determined to restrict the bibliography to the Teresian Reform, or, as it is more properly called, the Discalced Carmelite Order. We refer him who seeks further bibliography pertaining to the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance (the Calced Carmelite Fathers) to the excellent listing published in *Carmelus* by the Fathers in Rome.

The object of the *Archivum Bibliographicum Carmelitanum* may be expressed under two headings: (a) all works of any author pertaining to the history, life, spirituality, or personalities of the Discalced Carmelite Order; in this field there will obviously be an overlapping with the

Calced Carmelites with whom the Discalced share the Elian spirit, the brown scapular, the Rule of Saint Albert; and (b) all works written by any Discalced Carmelite of the First, Second, or Third Order. From time to time the editors intend to include supplementary bibliographical material, material regarding the Order which lies in the libraries and archives throughout the world, and reviews of recent books and studies relative to Carmelite spirituality. Each supplement consists of about three hundred pages.

The first volume of the bibliography appeared in 1956. It contains an introductory preface by Father Simeon, a list of the abbreviations used to designate the periodicals indicated throughout the study (221), an index of subject headings under which the listings are classified (e.g., Mariology, studies on Saint Joseph, Saint John of the Cross, etc.) and, at the end, an index of persons and anonymous works mentioned in the bibliography. The central, and main, portion of the book is dedicated to the Carmelite works of 1955. We find the presentation very clear and useful, and often Father Simeon has aided the reader by adding a short description of the contents of the article or book. A sample listing:

Thomas of the Sacred Hearts, OCD, 1907-- . Holy Oblivion,
SpLife 1 (1955) 106-112.

De purificatione memoriae juxta s. Joannem a Cruce.

The second volume appeared in 1957. The contents are ordered similarly, but with certain welcome additions promised in the introduction to the first volume. One of these is an appendix to the bibliography of 1955. Another is the promised study of Carmelite fonts contained in various libraries and archives. Father Gratian of Saint Teresa, O.C.D., is writing this series and, therefore, prefixes his first listing—the beginning of a bibliography of Carmelite wealth contained in the Vatican Library—by an explanation of the method he will use throughout his study. The last section of the volume contains reviews of some recent studies—among them a critical review of the latest French edition of Saint Teresa's *Book of Foundations* (by Father Thomas of the Cross), a scholarly evaluation of recent editions of the works of Saint John of the Cross (by Father Simeon of the Holy Family), and a commentary upon various studies—including the second issue of the *Spiritual Life* in 1956—written to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the Servant of God, Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity (by Father Philip of the Mother of God).

Such a work as this ought to be in the hands of anyone interested, not only in Teresian spirituality, but also in spirituality in general. We

say this because of the important contributions to spirituality made by such masters as Saint John of the Cross, Saint Teresa of Jesus, Saint Therese of Lisieux, Father Gabriel of Saint Mary Magdalen, and Father Silverio of Saint Teresa. The use of this bibliography will assist one to see, at a glance, the material available on any given subject. It will be of inestimable aid for furthering studies of spirituality and, consequently, for leading souls to perfection.

Father Sebastian, O.C.D.
Washington, D. C.

NEWMAN: HIS LIFE AND SPIRITUALITY, by Louis Bouyer, P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York, \$7.00

The chief value of Louis Bouyer's **NEWMAN** is that the work evaluates the *whole* of the great cardinal's life as cut from *one* piece. It does not draw any artificial distinction, as former studies did, between the younger and the older Newman; between Newman as a priest and a minister; between Newman the Cardinal and the man who was a leader in the Oxford movement. This is a significant point, and it is well that Father Bouyer insists on it frequently. No matter what care a biographer brings to the separate chapters of Newman's life, it is necessary for him to see as Bouyer does that the whole thing is drawn together in a tight, organic unity.

In addition to this important value of Bouyer's work, the volume corrects misunderstandings, slight and grave, created by previous biographies. By going back to original sources, some only lately published, Father Bouyer gives us a portrait of Newman that is at once more full and more authentic. Newman's notes for meditations and retreats, his addresses given to the Oratory, his private letters — these and other documents, including the full text of Anne Mosley's *Memoir*, come under the author's scholarly but by no means desiccated judgment. The resulting image of Newman appears admirably balanced. We see a man who, though he was well ahead of his age and ours, too, suffered most from his own greatest advantages and was bent — perhaps this word is not too strong — under the weight of the very talents which made him the giant, so to speak, of modern Christian thought. To take this view does not, of course, as Bouyer shows, excuse those who made Newman's life a purgatory upon earth.

Another outstanding feature of this book derives from the fact that its author, himself a former Protestant minister and now a member of the

Oratory, is able to project himself, possibly more than any of the other biographers, into Newman's experiences. He can identify himself with Newman; and, fortunately for himself as well as for us, he can explain the fuller dimensions of certain happenings which, for Newman the Anglican as well as Roman Catholic, must have constituted a profound and disturbing shock. These include the almost universal distrust of Newman: liberals thought him an obscurantist, and conservatives considered him a latitudinarian even when he proclaimed, upon receiving the red hat, that he was going to "fight liberalism"; they also include Newman's growing awareness of certain problems within Roman Catholicism such as mariolatry and other extravagances which Newman originally thought were unknown north of Naples. On the positive side, Bouyer gives us the benefit of his inner appreciation of the state of Newman's heart as well as of Newman's continuing certainty of the triumph that would be his.

Bouyer's book has many values and is an important one, to be sure; but I do not wish to give the impression that I put it down as a definitive study. I doubt, for instance, whether the French mind can ever get inside that of the English empirical philosophers whose thinking greatly influenced Newman. Nor do the fleshly sensibilities of Newman the Englishman, which Bouyer brilliantly describes, always have to have the significance which the author gives them. And I myself, from my own reading of Newman's sermons, strongly believe that these writings will get more detailed and measured attention in the final assessment, if there is to be one, of Newman's spirituality.

Still, Father Bouyer's portrait of Newman's character is the best I have ever seen. He throws a steady, even if oblique, light on the theological roots of Newman's piety. He shows how Newman's prestige exercised a controlling and salutary, however partial, influence on the development of Catholic dogma. He describes how Newman was helped, but also hampered, by his acceptance of the Catholic faith. More clearly than anyone else, Father Bouyer gives us a case history of what it is like, for better *and* for worse, to be inside the Catholic Thing. He tells of bigotry, credulity, and fanaticism; but he also speaks of refreshment, of light, and of peace.

This book has substantial merit. It sets a number of things right. It suggests lines for further study of Newman. It affords an upsetting but also rewarding glimpse of the Church in the modern world.

Thomas P. Coffey
New York

CHARLES DE FOUCAULD, by Lancelot C. Sheppard,
Clonmore & Reynolds, Dublin, c1957, 114 pp., 10/6

His was the common lot of pioneers,
He walked alone.

So does Lancelot Sheppard testify to the hermit vocation of Father Charles de Foucauld, slain in the Sahara in 1916. The onetime French aristocrat, explorer, army officer, has had popular biographies: e.g., the great study by Rene Bazin in 1921, and Anne Fremantle's *Desert Calling*. But to penetrate the Divine Purpose of De Foucauld's immolated solitude one needs to read Mr. Sheppard's new book. He presents De Foucauld as spiritual founder of a priest apostolate, *The Little Brothers of the Sacred Heart*, an apostolate he never lived to see. It is coming into being only now, all these years after his death, a fruit whose growth is like the mustard tree, sudden, amazing.

Mr. Sheppard develops in very interesting detail the beginnings of this new religious congregation of priests. He particularizes it as a vocation of *presence* but distinguishes it from the apostolate of Père Loeuw in Marseilles and the factory priests in Paris in that the whole aim of the Little Brothers is the formation and development of the contemplative life, and what work they do is undertaken primarily in order to live.

Some of his most interesting pages are those in which he presents the outline of this vocation. Dependent as they are on the weekly wage envelope, the Little Brothers' communities are characterized by financial insecurity, nor may they possess capital. The individual communities live in rented, 3-room houses, from 3 to 5 Brothers in a community. Their Rule calls for recitation of the Divine Office in the vernacular, they have prayer in common in the morning before leaving for work and in the evening upon their return. They wear work clothes to work, and their white, religious habits at home. They live their contemplative vocation in an intense spirit of Eucharistic immolation and offer it in the first place for those whose cross of daily labor they share. It would seem therefore to be not only a vocation of *presence*, but also of *identification*, the implications of which are tremendous for the laity.

The Little Brothers are increasing rapidly throughout the world. One can almost feel in this tiny book the breath of Divine Love and Compassion De Foucauld set free, sense it blowing over the working people of an industrial world from the tiny, obscure communities of his Little Brothers, carrying within it new seeds of holiness for the shaping of a new age.

Mary Kiely, Prov., R. I.

WRITINGS OF EDITH STEIN, selected, translated and introduced by Hilda Graef, The Newman Press, Westminster, 1956, 206 pp., \$3.75

The rising interest in the life and work of Edith Stein among English-speaking people is in large part due to the efforts of Hilda Graef. Her biography *The Scholar and the Cross* (Newman, 1955) introduced many to this woman who was born of Orthodox Jewish parents in Breslau, Germany, 1891, and died 50 years later, a Carmelite nun gassed by the Nazis in their Auschwitz inferno. The present work, an anthology of selections from Miss Stein's spiritual, educational, mystical, and philosophic writings, expands upon the first and allows the reader to become better acquainted with her "intellectual and spiritual personality." Miss Graef has herself selected and translated the ten various passages, which she so arranges that we are first led through the "more easily accessible writings (the spiritual meditations) . . . and from them to the more difficult ones (dealing with education, theology, and philosophy)" (p. 15).

Little of the philosophical section will interest *Spiritual Life* readers. From *Contributions to a Philosophical Foundation of Psychology*, a work which Edith Stein wrote as a student and assistant of the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl, Miss Graef selects 20 pages dealing with the differences between causation and motivation, attitudes and free acts. Here we see keen introspection and observation, and thorough investigation, but, for all that, the selection makes for rather tedious and fruitless reading.

Edith Stein does become more appealing in her educational essays. After being strongly prompted toward Catholicism by a chance reading of Saint Teresa of Avila's *Life*, Edith was baptized on New Year's Day, 1922. She at once turned her gifted intellect to the service of the Church and the years following conversion found her teaching in a Dominican convent school, translating Aquinas and Newman, and lecturing on the Christian education of women. In focusing her attention on the question of female education, Miss Stein retains her phenomenological methodology, analyzing her subjects, *The Vocation of Man and Woman According to Nature and Grace*, *Problems of Women's Education*, and *The Ethos of Women's Professions*, in the light of theology, philosophy, and psychology. But here she is not quite so ponderous as in her strictly phenomenological work; rather she rewards her reader's efforts with a profoundly Catholic insight into the mystery of personality and her solutions to the problems which in our times confront its full development.

She states that every human being has his "own meaning" and "unrepeatable peculiarity" which are brought to perfection only by the person's striving for sanctity and imitating the life of Christ. She reminds women — and this was a theme frequently expounded by the late Pope Pius XII — of the responsibility they have to themselves and to society of developing "their human nature in its specifically feminine and individual character" (pp. 146-147). For all women, married as well as religious, she insists on the imitation of Mary, "which is not another way beside the imitation of Christ: the imitation of Mary includes the imitation of Christ, because Mary was His first follower, and is the first and most perfect image of Christ. . . . But it is of special importance for women, because it will lead them to the feminine form of the image of Christ conformed to their nature" (p. 155). By stressing the following of Mary for all women and not merely the cloistered few, Edith Stein rightly interprets the vocation of wife and mother in the terms of sanctity rather than placing the ideal of womanhood in consecrated virginity, and she helps dispel the frequent assumption that conjugal love somehow implies a compromise with Christian perfection.

A vocation to the Carmelite sisterhood accompanied the gift of Faith which Edith Stein received through her reading Saint Teresa's autobiography. In 1933, Edith Stein, astute scholar, intellectual apostle, influential lecturer entered Cologne Carmel to become Sister Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, a hidden spouse of Christ who offered to the Sacred Heart the remaining nine years of her life for true world peace and the conversion of her beloved Jewish race.

After her religious clothing, Sister Teresa Benedicta was ordered by her superiors to resume her writing and intellectual activity. One result of this decision is *The Prayer of the Church*, a spiritual essay included in the present volume. Here are revealed the effects of a naturally brilliant modern philosopher's transformation into a supernaturally illuminated daughter of the Church. With complete simplicity and profound clarity, Sister Teresa discusses an oft debated topic, the union of liturgical and private prayer. She reminds us that our prayer, to be authentic, must be modeled on the prayer life of Jesus Christ. At the Last Supper, our Lord raised up and perfected the liturgical and private prayer of the Old Dispensation. Both are to be the "true prayer" of His Mystical Body and it is the Holy Spirit, continually alive in the Church, who continues throughout the ages this twofold praise of the Father: "without Him there would be neither Liturgy nor Church" (p. 43). Sister Teresa Benedicta concludes, that it is "inadmissible to oppose, as 'sub-

jective piety,' the interior prayer that is free from traditional forms to the liturgy as the 'objective' prayer of the Church. Every genuine prayer is prayer of the Church; through every prayer something happens in the Church, and it is the Church herself who prays in it, for it is the Holy Ghost living in her, who in every individual soul 'asketh for us with unspeakable groanings.' Precisely this is authentic prayer, for 'no man can say the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost.' What is the prayer of the Church if not the self-giving of great lovers to the God who is Love?" (p. 43).

The spiritual essays of Sister Teresa Benedicta are the overflow of a soul who was intensely devoted to Catholic dogma, Liturgy, and Sacred Scripture and who longed ardently for the totality of the Christ-life. A student of the life and doctrine of Saint John of the Cross, she found sustenance in the writings of her holy father to understand and undergo the trials of the interior life. "If we belong to Christ," she writes in a manner typical of St. John, "we have to live the whole Christ-life. We must mature into his Manhood, we must one day begin the Way of the Cross to Gethsemani and Golgotha. And all of the sufferings that come from without are as nothing compared with the dark night of the soul, when the divine light no longer shines, and the voice of the Lord no longer speaks. God is there, but He is hidden and silent" (p. 27).

It would, of course, be hasty to judge from this small cross-section of Edith Stein's work that a place must be made for her in the school of Carmelite mystical writers. But in the 100 or so pages of the *Writings of Edith Stein* actually devoted to religious subjects, all the marks of this school are present — clarity, doctrine, light of experience, literary grace, and vigor. (See the article "Literary Characteristics of the Carmelite School of Mystical Theology," by Father Joseph Mary, O.C.D., in the March, 1958, issue of *Spiritual Life*.) If you are interested in sound, timely spiritual reading, Sister Teresa Benedicta's spiritual and educational writings alone are worth the price of the book. And from these few pages you shall join us in the sincere hope that this anthology will be an incentive for further study in the volumes of Edith Stein, whose life and writings have become for many of us "a light for learning and an example of virtue." (This quotation is from the authorized *Prayer for the Beatification of Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, O.C.D. (Edith Stein)*, reprinted in *The Age of Mary*, Sept.-Oct., 1958.)

Brother Kevin, O.C.D.

Holy Hill, Wisconsin

A MAN OF GOOD ZEAL, by John E. Beahn, The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1958, 236 pp., \$3.75

For many years now, the cry of complaint heard in Catholic literary circles is that the biographies of saints have been stereotyped and non-compelling. One of the recent remedies for this situation is the fictionalized biography. It has this advantage that it possesses the possibility of creating more easily a living person from cold historical facts. Whether this result is achieved is dependent, of course, upon the literary genius of the particular writer.

John E. Beahn in his new book, *A Man of Good Zeal*, makes use of this device of fictionalized biography to give a personal, intimate account of the life of St. Francis de Sales. He has the cousin of St. Francis recording the history of his life. Having been the life-long companion of the saint, he supposedly was in a better position than anyone else to do this.

This device which the author uses is a very clever one, but also a very difficult one. Besides the burden of keeping the story alive and moving, he has the additional chore of keeping the narrative from becoming monotonous. Has he been able to achieve this in his work? Unfortunately, for the most part, I would say that he has not.

The narrative of St. Francis' life is flat and colorless. Event after event is told without that conviction which should ring out from one who has personally witnessed them. From the account of Francis' early years to his death there is lacking the warmth and intimacy which certainly should be present when the narrator is supposed to have been a close witness. Even the description of the saint's death is stripped of this familiarity. Vitality is lacking with the inevitable result that the story is monotonous. I cannot say that the book has drawn me closer to St. Francis.

The author is no unsuccessful writer in the field of fictionalized biography. We have proof of this in his earlier work, *A Rich Young Man*. Here he writes very convincingly in straight dramatic narrative. Perhaps if he had employed the "third-person" instead of the difficult "first-person" he uses here, he would have been more successful in re-creating a living portrait of St. Francis de Sales.

Father Claude, O.C.D., Washington, D. C.

LIVING THE INTERIOR LIFE, by Wendelin Meyer, O.F.M., translated by Colman O'Donovan, Newman Press, Westminster, 1958, 189 pp., \$3.50

Living the Interior Life is a commentary on the *Imitation of Christ*. The content of the book was originally presented as a series of lectures for religious women, and it shares a common goal with the book of which it is a commentary: "the aim of revivifying the members of the community."

However, Father Meyer does not attempt to cover the entire four books in his talks. He limits himself to the first two books, calling the first, according to an old manuscript text, "Practical Directions for the Religious Life," the second, "Aids to Spirituality." He further limits his scope by picking out from three to five key sentences or phrases from each chapter and developing them in terms of convent life of today. At times the entire theme of a given chapter in the *Imitation* filters through so that a sort of paraphrasing results. In other chapters Father Meyer adds new ideas to the already proven norms of religious conduct and thereby sheds light on the present day needs of religious.

The book, I would judge, fulfills its purpose. It is certainly more a book of meditations than an objective series of lectures in book form. The chapters are so divided that a single heading could be read publicly or privately as a preparation for prayer. It surely would not stand the demands of spiritual reading. For one thing, the print is too small for sustained reading. Furthermore, it is written to inspire rather than inform. The questionnaire concluding each chapter is meant to draw some practical resolutions from the reader.

Although the audience which the author addresses is limited, I believe the book can be profitable to male religious as well as to the laity, for the principles he discusses are important for all of us.

The author's style as well as the translator's efforts are clear, moving and fresh. The sentences are shorter than the usual Germanic one-sentence paragraph.

Father Simon, O.C.D., Washington, D. C.

PLEDGE OF GLORY, Eucharistic Meditations based on the Prayer of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity, by Dom Eugene Vandeur, translated from the French by the Dominican Nuns of Corpus Christi, Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1958, 238 pp., \$3.00

Pledge of Glory is the author's second commentary on the prayer of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity. As in his first, *Trinity Whom I Adore*, Dom Vandeur uses the phrases of the prayer as a basis for developing meditations, this time in the light of the Holy Eucharist.

In this new work, a translation from the French of "*A la Trinite par l'Hostie*," Dom Vandeur seeks to show the unity in the devotion to the Holy Trinity and the Holy Eucharist. Union with Christ in the reception of the Holy Eucharist is in fact union with the Holy Trinity, because of the inseparability of the Godhead from the Sacred Humanity of Christ. In the Preface he writes, "It seemed to us that this prayer might well serve as an excellent framework for some reflections which would be highly useful at the moment when Jesus, in full possession of the soul longs to draw her toward the Godhead."

The book is divided into six sections and contains fifty-one chapters, none of which exceeds four pages. The meditations are very personal and the author's admission that "they were written down during our thanksgiving" may emphasize this approach. The book will surely help anyone whose thanksgivings are in danger of becoming routine. And there is enough doctrine to enable the reader to lay the book aside and make his own thanksgiving. Dom Vandeur's new commentary is faithful to the mind of Sister Elizabeth and should aid many souls to go to the Most Holy Trinity by means of the Host.

Bro. Gerald, O.C.D., Holy Hill, Wis.

THE RISEN CHRIST, by Caryl Houselander, Sheed and Ward, New York, 1958, 111 pp., \$2.75

There is captured in these meditations something of the peace of the Resurrection and something too of the joy. Perhaps it is because of Miss Houselander's peculiar genius in grasping the worlds of meaning beneath terse Scripture verses. For such she has done again, for the last time, sadly enough for us, and for those to whom the Gospels are as cold and bleak as predawn fog, she is able to cast the first penetrating ray of light. She makes the personality of Christ come alive in these medita-

tions as when she finds an "adorable sense of humor" in Christ's filling Peter's net full of fish again after His Resurrection. "Poor Peter, how good it is that he proved to be so splendid a fisher of men, for he seems to have been a poor fisher of fishes!" (p. 26.)

There is one theme that suffuses and penetrates and encompasses these meditations: love, which is the sharing of the Risen Life. It is a love for Christ and love for neighbor which Miss Houselander, like St. John the Apostle, is quick to point out are one. This is love like to Christ's love, especially like to those aspects that we see so characteristically after the Resurrection when He seems to be at added pains to remain hidden, gentleness, courtesy, a personal approach adapted to the needs of each of the individuals with whom He comes in contact. This is the love that we, as partakers of the Risen Life, are meant to give and to receive from one another. And we are to give it secretly, not by methods akin to "conversion by concussion."

Penetratingly she shows how this love can be shared in all facets of ordinary life. There is a chapter on *work*: how love must be reintroduced into work despite its present stage of dehumanization. There is another meditation, perhaps even more apt for this generation which finds that it must ever be doing something, on *rest*. Miss Houselander's is a great talent for she sees so deeply into things, stripping bare all the various guises, that our little petty selfish ways, by which we show our love, take. For these she has no sympathy. But beyond this artificiality she shows how even the most humdrum of lives can be transformed by Christ-love. She seems particularly concerned with those who ostensibly have no "mission." One wonders if she, who did so much for the bringing of Christ to others, considered herself as one of them.

For such was her "mission." She opened the eyes of those blind to spiritual things and showed them where to look. She says in this book, as said St. Paul, "If you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above," but in a manner somewhat different, for she taught us how to find those very things hidden all around us; in a cancer patient's sores, in a child's dirty upturned face, in a dew-petaled flower. Here is where she has found Christ and it is her gift to the world that not only did she find Him there for herself but she was able to part the curtains of mundane trivialities for others. In this lies the secret charm of this work, for she has had the grace to share the joy of the Risen Life with her fellow Christians and to teach them to give that joy in some measure to others. What, one wonders, must be her joy now, she who had so much to give when she was yet in this "vale of tears"?

Mary Ann Beattie, Grosse Pointe, Mich.